

Palestinian woman stabs Israeli policeman

NETZARIM, Gaza Strip (R) — A Palestinian woman stabbed and lightly wounded an Israeli border policeman on Tuesday near a Jewish settlement in the Gaza Strip, the army said. Palestinian police Brigadier General Saeb Ajez said the assailant, 32, came from Bureij refugee camp. Police said she was released last week from a mental institution. Police, patrolling in the area controlled jointly by Israel and the PNA, said they jumped on her and brought her under control to prevent Israeli soldiers from firing at her. The army said the border policeman was taken to a clinic for treatment.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرأي

Suspected militants kill 6 policemen in Egypt

ASSIUT (R) — Suspected Muslim Islamists shot dead five policemen and their officer and injured two civilians Tuesday in an attack on a police patrol just outside a southern Egyptian town, security sources said. They said the men fled after gunning down five policemen and Lieutenant Maged Farouq Mehanna near the house of the state security inspector at the outskirts of Minya, some 240 kilometres south of Cairo. Two civilians were wounded in the attack, they added. The province of Minya has been the centre of a long running conflict between police and the militant Gama'a Al Islamiya (Islamic group), which says it is fighting to overthrow the government and set up a purist Islamist state. More than 1,000 people have been killed since the Gama'a took up arms against the government in 1992.

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King calls on Muslims to draw plan to resolve social problems

'Children, teenagers face negligence, hunger, disease, exploitation and illegal employment'

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday called on Muslim scholars to come up with a plan to solve the social problems suffered by the Muslim and Arab worlds. Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the 11th conference of the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research (Al al Bayt Foundation), the King emphasised that the plan should stem from the Islamic and Arab culture.

The four-day meeting, which is held under the theme "Islam and Present Day Social Problems," will also discuss cooperation among Muslim scholars.

The King said the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research (RAICR) selected several social issues through various symposiums, conferences, inter-faith dialogues to discuss and solve.

"Despite all efforts exerted, the Islamic World still lacks a well-defined scientific

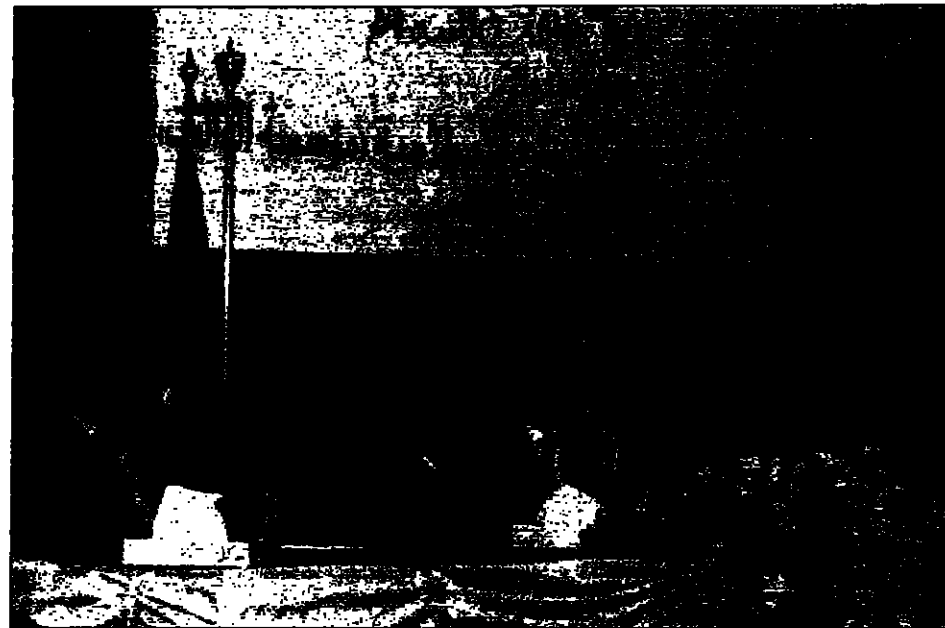
plan that would be followed to treat these social problems...namely poverty, unemployment, development, women, youth, environment, population, drugs and the elderly," the King said in his speech to more than 100 scholars from 27 Arab and Muslim nations.

"How can the civilised Islamic programme take part in setting standards to protect the underprivileged sectors of the society," the King asked.

"The victims of human cruelty are mostly the innocent. The children and teenagers from the weakest strata of the society... who face negligence, hunger, disease, exploitation and illegal employment," he said.

"For several reasons... children and teenagers are pushed to street pavements where they fall prey to drugs... which adds a new dimension to the problems they are suffering," the King said.

King Hussein stressed that more interest should be focused on refugee prob-



His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan at the inauguration ceremony of the 11th conference of the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research - Al al Bayt Foundation, on Tuesday (Photo by Yousef Allan)

lems, where around 700 persons are forced to leave their countries daily.

"Independent and private studies...indicated that the Islamic World was the most

affected by the outcomes of disasters and world tragedies... 70 per cent of refugees in the world are Muslims. Many Islamic countries have suffered from

armed violence and are still suffering," the King said. He said that the Kingdom has established and suggested

(Continued on page 7)

Israel's opposition wins symbolic Knesset victory

TEL AVIV (AP) — In a symbolic victory for Israel's dovish opposition, the Knesset on Monday passed a motion of no-confidence in Benjamin Netanyahu's government — but not by the absolute majority needed to topple his government.

Lawmakers voted in favour of the opposition motion by 49-44 but to bring down the prime min-

ister the opposition needed the support of 61 out of the 120 Knesset members.

Army radio quoted Mr. Netanyahu as saying he was angry with the National Religious Party, whose nine lawmakers are part of his 66-member coalition but abstained from the vote because of an unrelated dispute over appointments of religious functionaries.

It was the latest in a series

of recent no-confidence motions in which Mr. Netanyahu has been embarrassed by less than stellar support from members of his coalition.

Several of them, including former cabinet ministers, Dan Meridor and Benny Begin, are openly trying to bring about his replacement.

Mr. Netanyahu faces another challenge from

Ariel Sharon, his infrastructure minister, who on Wednesday plans to bring to a Knesset vote a proposal to make it easier to impeach Mr. Netanyahu.

Mr. Sharon, who helped engineer Mr. Netanyahu's surprise victory in last May's election, is disgruntled because the premier has not closely consulted

(Continued on page 7)

UNSCOM chief visits site outside Baghdad

BAGHDAD (AFP) — New U.N. disarmament chief, Richard Butler on Wednesday visited a site outside Baghdad on the eve of talks with Iraqi leaders, U.N. officials said.

They said the visit took place by helicopter but declined to give details. Mr. Butler was to meet on his return with U.N. staff at their arms monitoring centre in Baghdad.

On his arrival in Iraq on Monday, Mr. Butler promised to be "fair" and steer clear of politics in his job to eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, clearing the way for the lifting of the seven-year-old U.N. sanctions.

The chairman of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) for disarmament Iraq also said

(Continued on page 7)

Arafat and Levy meet in bid to rescue dying peace process

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat met Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy here on Tuesday as part of a European Union attempt to breathe life into the ailing Middle East peace process.

The two men met in the presence of Luxembourg's Foreign Minister Jacques Poos, representing the EU's rotating presidency.

But no face-to-face talks were scheduled and a planned joint dinner with the 15 EU foreign ministers had to be scrapped, British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said, dampening hopes of any significant breakthrough.

The two men were to separately address the foreign ministers later on Tuesday evening.

The EU organised the meeting in a bid to navigate a way out of the impasse that has existed since March, when Israel broke ground for a new settlement in occupied east

Jerusalem, infuriating the Palestinians.

Mr. Cook said EU efforts to improve the atmosphere would focus on promoting better economic cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians. He urged the Israeli government to open border points with the territories and the international sea port and airports in Gaza.

On his way to the talks, Mr. Arafat strongly attacked the United States for what he called its failure to put pressure on Israel over its attitude towards the peace process.

"The situation in the (Palestinian) territories is getting worse," Mr. Arafat told reporters after discussions in Alexandria, Egypt, with President Hosni Mubarak.

"We praise the continuation of European efforts because the United States is no longer concerned by the situation in the Middle East," he said. "We hope the United States will

realise its moral and political responsibility and change its attitude."

There has been no substantial contact between senior Israeli and Palestinian officials since construction work began on the settlement site in March, sparking a wave of violence in the Palestinian territories.

The Palestinians are demanding a halt to settlement building before they will return to the negotiating table, a condition which Israel rejects.

Mr. Arafat and Mr. Levy's meeting was the first since they met briefly on the sidelines of the Euro-Mediterranean conference in Malta on April 16. That encounter yielded little more than a photo-opportunity.

Tuesday's encounter came against a background of renewed tension between Israel and the Palestinians over security issues.

Israeli police chief boycotts meeting with PNA official

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel's police chief has decided to boycott a meeting with his Palestinian counterpart, accused by Israel of ordering attacks against the Jewish State, officials said on Tuesday.

Assaf Hefetz cancelled talks with General Ghazi Jabali due to be held this week because of "the current circumstances," said spokeswoman Linda Menuhin.

Israel accuses Gen. Jabali of encouraging subordinates to carry out anti-Israeli attacks, charges denied by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

Last week, four Palestinian police officers suspected of taking part in attacks against Jewish settlers were arrested.

On Saturday, the PNA also arrested Colonel Jihad Massimi, head of the Criminal Investigation Department in the West

Bank town of Nablus, accusing him of ordering three policemen to attack a Jewish settlement in the West Bank.

Relations between the Israeli and Palestinian police forces have been tense since the peace process collapsed in mid-March when Mr. Netanyahu ordered the start of construction on a new Jewish settlement in disputed east Jerusalem.

Government, opposition to meet in bid to soften stands before elections

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government expressed on Tuesday its intent to hold dialogue with political parties and the Islamists in particular in a bid to break the ice before the upcoming parliamentary elections due in November. "It is likely that a meeting (between the government) and political parties will take place...but no date has been set yet," said Acting Minister of State for Information Affairs Nasser Lawzi.

"The government welcomes dialogue over parliamentary elections with any party. The doors of dialogue are wide open for everyone," Mr. Lawzi said after a Cabinet meeting.

Leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, who have recently announced the movement's determination to boycott the upcoming elections, reacted to the government's initiative positively. On Monday, member of the Brotherhood's executive bureau, Jamil Abu Baker, unveiled a government's rapprochement initiative towards the Islamists that was made clear after Prime

Minister Abdul Salam Majali contacted the movement's leader Abdul Majid Thuneibat by telephone.

Mr. Abu Baker expressed, in a statement made to Al Rai Arabic daily, the Islamists' approval and welcoming of all rapprochement attempts as a "necessary prelude towards breaking the deadlock." He emphasised though that the meeting with the government, which he expected will take place in the next few days, "necessitates consultations within the movement."

"We should acknowledge that there is a real crisis and that everyone should work collectively to protect the nation," Mr. Abu Baker said.

Although Islamists welcomed dialogue with the government, they appeared nevertheless sceptical of the outcome. In the Islamist Al-Sabeel weekly, the mouthpiece of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) party, the editor cast doubt on the government's seriousness and willingness to compromise. The editor excluded the possibility that the government will meet the Brotherhood's demands and said that the

contacts the government is making with political parties are not but to serve propaganda purposes.

The Brotherhood earlier said that the boycott decision was based on its discontent with government policies. It pointed to the government's

introduction of temporary laws, the one-man, one-vote electoral law and the Press and Publications Law in particular, as well as the need to amend the Constitution, fight normalisation of relations with Israel, promote public freedoms.

(Continued on page 7)



DAKAMSEH'S TOWN WALKS: Approximately 100 women and children from Irbid village, near Irbid, staged a demonstration Tuesday for the release of Ahmad Dakamseh. Demonstrators clashed with security forces who blocked them from continuing to Irbid. Security forces fired tear gas to disperse the crowd. Demonstrators held the convicted man's portrait and the Holy Koran and were chanting and asking His Majesty King Hussein to release the prisoner. Some demonstrators were arrested.

Jordan, Israel work in unison to combat bugs

Eilat Municipality responsible for sudden increase of insects in Aqaba

By Ramadan Rawashdeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan and Israel agreed at a meeting Tuesday to embark on a joint campaign to deal with the problem of common flies and mosquitoes which have been infesting the Jordan Valley region.

The two sides decided also to focus their awareness campaigns for farmers on the proper use of poultry manure and to coordinate joint spraying of pesticides and methods for combating flies.

The Jordanian side to the meeting was led by Dr. Dureid Mahasneh, secretary general of the Jordan Valley Authority and the Israeli delegation was led by Ms. Nihama Ronnen, director general of the Israeli Environment Department. The accompanying delegations comprised of technicians and

agricultural specialists. Following the meeting, Dr. Mahasneh told the Jordan Times that "the Israeli delegation has admitted that the Eilat Municipality was responsible for the sudden increase in the insects, flies and mosquitoes in the southern Aqaba city and the Jordan Valley because of the damage that occurred at the Eilat Waste Water Treatment Plant due to a technical failure, but a permanent solution for the damage will not be forthcoming before the lapse of at least one to one and a half years from now."

"The two sides discussed a long term plan for combating the insects in the Jordan Valley which he said will take some time to carry out and requires external sources of finance," according to Dr. Mahasneh who noted that the two sides agreed to promptly embark on a joint study which should be finished

by the end of September.

Dr. Mahasneh said the two sides agreed to intensify their future meetings and had another meeting of experts on ecology scheduled for next week.

Under the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty the two sides are to take steps to jointly or individually prevent any harm or danger to the environment of either side. It also provided for joint cooperation along the common borders and the Jordan River to safeguard the local ecology and to prevent water pollution to water resources and the agricultural lands by combating pests and insects.

The technical breakdown in the Eilat waste water treatment plant has caused the insects to multiply in a dangerous manner in the Aqaba and Eilat regions prompting the two sides to hold emergency meetings to deal with the situation.



Palestinian President Yasser Arafat (C), Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy (R) and Luxembourg's Foreign Minister and current EU Chairman Jacques Poos (L) pose this Tuesday afternoon at the European Council Justus Lipsius building in Brussels, where they met for an EU-led political discussion (See story on page 1) (AFP photo)

Oman, 2nd Gulf state to open representative office in Gaza

MUSCAT (AP) — Oman Tuesday announced it would open a government office in Gaza to improve ties with the Palestinians, the official Omani news agency said.

Oman will be the second Gulf Arab country after Qatar to have an office in the Palestinian territories. Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia also have representatives in Gaza, where the Palestinian National Authority (PNA)

is now headquartered.

A statement by Oman's foreign ministry said Ambassador Salem Ben Fakhar Shanfari has been appointed to head the office, but no date has yet been set for its opening, the news agency said.

Unlike in most Arab countries, Palestinians have no diplomatic representation in Muscat.

In 1995, Qatar and Oman broke with their Gulf allies and opened trade links

with Israel. But plans for further expanding ties were put on hold amid rising Arab-Israeli tensions after the election last May of hard-line Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Both Qatar and Oman have said they will establish full diplomatic relations with Israel only when a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement is reached.

Christian group condemns Saudi execution of Filipinos

NICOSIA (AFP) — An international association for persecuted Christians has condemned the execution in Saudi Arabia of two Filipinos, saying they were sentenced to death for preaching the Christian faith.

The two men, Ruel Janda and Arnel Betran, were beheaded by the sword in the Saudi capital Riyadh in May after being convicted of armed robbery, according to the Saudi interior ministry.

But in a statement received in Nicosia on Tuesday, Netherlands-based group Portes Ouvertes quoted a fellow prisoner Donato Lama as saying the charges against the two Catholics were "false and completely fabricated."

"According to him, the two men, imprisoned since April 7, 1995, were executed because of their Christian preaching to other Filipino prisoners," the group said.

Janda and Betran conducted Bible studies and prayer meetings during their detention in the Saudi prison, Portes Ouvertes said.

Lama, a computer technician with Saudi Airlines, said he himself was arrested after police discovered a photograph of him praying with other expatriate Christians

Ministry tells men to ensure women are veiled in public

JEDDAH (AP) — Men in Saudi Arabia have a responsibility to ensure that their women relatives are properly covered in public, the information ministry said in a statement published Tuesday.

"The ministry of information has advised people to ensure that women do not leave their homes without being veiled and properly covered," the Saudi Gazette reported. The English language daily quoted the ministry as saying the directive was addressed to men because they are responsible for women in Islamic societies.

"According to Islamic teachings, the fathers, husbands and guardians are responsible for the care of their families. They should not allow their women to go out without being veiled," the paper quoted the ministry as saying. There was no explanation for why the warning was issued now, though some women — especially in large cities — have become more casual about how they wear their traditional head scarves.

Women in Saudi Arabia, one of the most conservative Muslim nations, generally don't appear in public without a black cloak called an "abaya" and a head scarf. Very conservative women also wear covers on their faces.

one Christmas day.

He was freed and returned to the Philippines in March this year.

Saudi Arabia strictly applies Islamic law, or Sharia. It imposes the death penalty to those found guilty of murder, rape, armed robbery and drug smuggling.

They are usually executed in public squares after Muslim prayers on Friday.

Janda and Betran were convicted of the armed robbery of a vegetable shop in the capital, according to the Saudi interior ministry.

At least 67 people have been executed in Saudi Arabia this year. In 1996 a total of 68 people were executed, according to official figures, while in 1995, a record 191 faced the death penalty in the kingdom.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Yemen, EU sign project to curb growth

SANAA (R) — The European Union (EU) will fund a campaign in Yemen raising awareness of the country's burgeoning population and ways to keep birth rates in check, the official Al Thawra newspaper said on Tuesday. "According to an agreement the European Union will provide Yemen with about \$2 million for the three-year project, which seeks to increase media coverage of population issues," it said. Official figures put Yemen's population at about 16.7 million with an annual growth rate of about 3.8 per cent. The deal was signed on Monday, the paper said.

Three dead in Turkish forest fire

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey's worst forest fire of the year was brought under control Tuesday after it killed three people, the Anatolia news agency reported. Forest covering 60 square kilometres in southern Antalya province, 350 kilometres south of Ankara, was destroyed in the blaze which began Monday for unknown reasons, it said. Two villages were evacuated late on Monday when they were threatened by the flames. Hundreds of troops joined firefighters in efforts to control the blaze.

186 Kurds seek asylum in Italy

SYRACUSE (R) — Nearly 200 Kurds who were seized off the Sicilian coast last week as they tried to row ashore have requested political asylum in Italy, police said on Monday. They said the 186 Kurds would be interviewed on Tuesday before their request was considered. The Kurds were among 350 immigrants from countries across Asia who boarded rubber dinghies from a Turkish ship off the island's southeast coast last Thursday. Coast guards blocked the dinghies before surrounding the ship and escorting it into port where police arrested five Turkish crew members on charges of trafficking illegal immigrants. The immigrants were being held at a local sports centre.

Bezeq ordered back to work

TEL AVIV (AP) — A court ordered thousands of employees at Israel's state-run Bezeq telephone company back to work Tuesday after a week-long strike shut down phone lines across the country, including those used by the army and Israel's international airport. Workers were striking to protest management plans to sell part of the company to Merrill Lynch, fearing the sale would lead to job cuts and jeopardize workers' rights. During the week-long strike, army phone lines went down for hours and Ben Gurion International Airport was temporarily without service, the Yediot Achronot newspaper said. On Tuesday, the Tel Aviv labour court issued a back-to-work order. Bezeq spokesman Ella Bar-Or said. It was not immediately clear if the workers would obey the court order.

Israel to market Uzi in U.S. after 10-year ban

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel has received approval to market its Uzi semi-automatic rifle in the U.S. after a 10-year ban, an Israeli official said Tuesday. The official, who declined to be identified, confirmed a report in the Yediot Achronot newspaper that Israel military industries had developed a model of the Uzi that fires only single rounds and cannot be converted to an automatic weapon. The U.S. banned import of automatic weapons in 1987 after they were used in a rash of crimes, the newspaper said. It took IMI and its American subsidiary a year to get approval from the U.S. Bureau of alcohol, tobacco and firearms for marketing the Uzi, the report said.

Algerian army seeks surrender of FIS army chief — Al Hayat

LONDON (AFP) — The Algerian army has begun contacts with the chief of the armed wing of the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) to seek his surrender, the Arabic language daily Al Hayat reported, citing a high-level source. Madani Mezrag, head of the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), was approached along with his deputy Aissa Lehlili with guarantees of clemency, the London-based newspaper reported. Under Algerian law, clemency may be granted to those within armed groups whose actions have not left anyone dead or maimed, and reduced sentences for others. About 1,000 fighters have received such dispositions, and some have since joined community guards or self-defence units in Algeria. Mr. Mezrag, 37, is one of Algeria's most wanted men, with 4.5 million dinars on his head. Rumours that Mr. Mezrag might surrender have circulated for several months.

Indonesia exports tea to Iraq under U.N. oil-for-food deal

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesian companies have exported 3,000 tonnes of tea to Iraq under a scheme to allow Baghdad to import food and are confident of more sales if the U.N. programme is extended, industry sources said on Tuesday.

The sources said the United Nations had given approval for the export of 4,000 tonnes of Indonesian tea, 3,000 tonnes of which had been shipped over the past two months. The rest was expected to be sent in early August.

The exports are estimated to be worth between \$8 million and \$10 million.

Iraq has been allowed by the United Nations to sell \$2 billion worth of oil over six months and spend the proceeds on food and medicine. The United Nations must approve all such purchases.

The industry sources said the companies were awaiting U.N. approval for the export of another 2,000 tonnes of tea to Iraq.

Another industry source said another 4,000 tonnes of tea had been shipped to Iraq through Jordan under private deals not covered by the U.N. oil-for-food deal.

All transactions call for

cash on delivery, sources said.

The Iraqi ambassador to Indonesia, Sa'doon J. Zubaydi, confirmed that Indonesian tea had been exported to Iraq, but did not have details.

He said Iraq favoured doing business with friendly countries such as Indonesia. Both countries are predominantly Muslim.

"Our psychological stature, if you like, is more geared towards countries that have been friendly with us. Indonesia is one of those countries," he told Reuters.

Police detain Egyptian Islamist wanted in slaying of Christians

ASSIUT (AP) — Police have detained a Muslim militant commander wanted since 1992 for slaying 12 Christian farmers in southern Egypt, security officials said Tuesday.

The officials said that Mohammed Mahmoud Zahran, a regional leader of the outlawed Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah, or the Islamic group, was taken into custody on Monday in the town of Dairut, 55 kilometres north-east of this southern city.

The officials said Zahran was being interrogated by state security. They spoke on customary condition of anonymity.

The attack on the Christians in 1992 was one of the worst incidents involving the minority since extremists launched their campaign of violence five years ago to try to overthrow Egypt's secular government and replace it with strict Islamic rule.

In the incident, extremists gunned down 12 Christian villagers near Assiut after a rumour spread that a Christian was pressuring a Muslim to sell his land. A Muslim also died in the firing.

Assiut is 320 kilometres south of the capital Cairo.

Zahran has family connections to Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, the spiritual leader of the Islamist group who is

imprisoned in the United States for conviction on a charge of conspiring to blow up New York landmarks.

Police said Zahran and Abdul Rahman are married to sisters. The militants from time to time have targeted Coptic Christians, who make up about 10 per cent of Egypt's 60 million people.

On Feb. 12, extremists shot nine Christians to death in Mar Girgis Church in the village of Al Fiqriya in Minya province north of Assiut.

At least 1,100 people have been killed in the extremist violence, most of them police or radicals.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:35French Programmes
16:05Neighbours
16:30Spell Binder
17:30Forests of the world
18:00French Programmes
19:00News in French
19:30News Headlines
19:35Step by Step
20:00Soldier's Diary
20:30Challenges
21:10Spencer For Hire
22:00News in English
22:30Land's End
23:15American Gothic

PRAYER TIMES

04:09Fajr
05:40(Sunrise) Dhuha
12:42Dhuhr
16:23Asr
19:44Maghreb
21:15Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifeh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366

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Anglican Church Tel. 652826

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Amman International Church Tel. 5516245

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

Dr. Mazen Nhalil830435

Dr. Fakhri Bihbeisi552233

Dr. Adnan Zughloul898140

Dr. Faysal Dabbas798155

Firas pharmacy661912

Ferdows pharmacy890280

Al Asema pharmacy637055

Al Salam pharmacy636730

Yacoub pharmacy644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Nairokh pharmacy623672

Najib pharmacy847632

IRBID:

Dr. Ahmad Qanu281484

Al Quds pharmacy(—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Mazen Safarini985832

Khalifeh pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 33, Aqaba 40 Humidity readings: Amman 31 per cent, Aqaba 28 per cent.

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192. 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade617101

Blind Bank775121

Highway Police843402

Traffic Police896390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints605800

Price Complaints661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints897467

Amman Municipality Complaints787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance)121

Overseas Calls010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television773111

Radio Jordan774111

Water Authority680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre

813813/32

Khalidi Maternity, 644281/6

Akikh Maternity, 642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845455

Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic Abdali 666126/7

Al-Ahli, Abdali664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3

Al-Bashir775111/26

Army, Marks891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery .865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital

(09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital

(09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital

(02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital

(02)272275

Ibn Al Nafees Hospital

(02)247100

AAQA:

Princess Haya Hospital

(03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA

INTERNATIONAL

AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200 where it should always be verified. Information on other flights are supplied on phone 08 (52700) or 08(53250).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ)

Flights

08:05Damascus (RJ)

09:25 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

09:30Jeddah (RJ)

10:15Laraca (RJ)

10:45Doha, Bahrain (RJ)

15:55 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

17:30Madrid (RJ)

17:40Toronto, Montreal (RJ)

18:05Istanbul (RJ)

18:05Paris (RJ)

18:40Brussels, Geneva (RJ)

19:05Rome (RJ)

19:10Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)

19:10London, Berlin (RJ)

00:15Beirut (RJ)

01:05Cairo (RJ)

04:

King receives message from Indian prime minister

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday received a written message from Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral regarding Jordanian-Indian cooperation in economic fields.

The message, delivered to the King and HRH Crown Prince Hassan by visiting Indian Minister of Chemicals and Fertilisers, M. Arunachalam, contains an invitation to visit India.

The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Chief of the Royal Court Awa Khasawneh, Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs and Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Jawad Anani and Indian Ambassador to Jordan Gajanan Wakankar.

Mr. Arunachalam had earlier met with the prime minister to deliver a separate message from the Indian premier.

He also covered Jordan-



His Majesty King Hussein and HRH Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday meet with visiting Indian Minister of Chemicals and Fertilisers M. Arunachalam to discuss Jordanian-Indian cooperation (Petra photo)

ian-Indian cooperation in chemicals and the fertilisers industry with Dr. Majali.

Mr. Arunachalam voiced his country's appreciation of Jordanian efforts in the peace process and

stressed his country's readiness to cooperate with Jordan in the fertiliser industry.

The Indian minister, who is leading a three-member delegation on a visit to the Kingdom, Monday attend-

ed a ceremony in southern Jordan for the inauguration of a \$170 million phosphoric acid plant. The plant's annual production of over 224,000 tonnes of phosphoric acid will be exported to Indian markets.

Hebron University signs agreement with RSS

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Royal Scientific Society (RSS) and Hebron University have signed a cooperation agreement in the field of olive mills wastewater treatment, an RSS statement said.

The agreement aims at the transfer of RSS Environmental Research Centre (ERC) technology and expertise to the university.

Olive oil mills in the Palestinian autonomous areas presently number

over 300, which causes continuous deterioration of the quality of surface and ground water, according to the statement.

Based on the agreement, Hebron University researchers will receive training at the society on wastewater treatment methods, laboratory techniques and experimental field work.

RSS researchers, in turn, will assist Palestinian researchers in assessing the

present situation in the Palestinian territories and in installing a pilot treatment unit in Hebron.

The agreement also entails identifying cost-effective alternatives for the treatment of olive mills wastewater in these territories, the statement said.

This agreement is financed by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada with the purpose of disseminating acquired

expertise and knowledge in the Middle East.

Since 1993, the ERC has conducted pioneering research on olive mills wastewater treatment in Jordan, according to the statement.

The project involved, in addition to laboratory studies, the construction of a pilot plant at the premises of an olive oil mill in Salt to study feasible alternatives for treatment of olive mills wastewater.

Conference to cover translation, literature

AMMAN (J.T.) — The English Department at the University of Jordan is preparing for "the first international conference on Arabic-English contrastive and comparative studies," a university statement said.

The conference, to be held at the University of Jordan, between August 23 and 27, will focus on three main areas: a) Arabic and Western literature: a cross cultural approach, b) Arabic and English contrastive and interlanguage studies: state of the art

and c) The teaching of translation: academia vs. professionalism.

Approximately 130 participants from Jordan, Palestine, the Arab World, and several other countries will take part in the various sessions, and about 110 studies related to the above mentioned categories will be presented, according to the statement.

"In addition to the papers to be presented and the fruitful discussions which will take place," Chairman of the Department of English and of the

Conference Committee Professor Lewis Muqattash said, "we hope to convince participants of the importance of forming an association for specialists in English language, literature, and translation at Arab universities whose job is to turn this first-time conference into an annual event and think of ways of fostering and upgrading the teaching of the three disciplines at all Arab universities," the statement concluded.

Cabinet names committee to study U.N. compensation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Cabinet Tuesday named a ministerial committee to study U.N. compensation for Jordanians who were forced to abandon their homes and businesses as a result of the Gulf war.

The committee, to be chaired by Deputy Prime Minister for Services and Minister of Administrative Development Abdullah Ensour and groups the ministers of foreign affairs, Awqaf and Islamic affairs, justice, finance and labour, will construct a mechanism to ensure that eligible persons receive their due compensation.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Fayez Tarawneh detailed the kind of com-

pensation to be allotted to individuals and companies by the U.N. committee.

Minister of Public Works and Housing and acting Minister of State for Information Affairs Naser Lawzi told the press that the committee will convene Thursday to develop a programme regarding issues pertaining to the awaited compensation.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali summarised developments of his recent visit to the Palestinian self-rule areas as well as his meetings with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on the peace process.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Development Affairs Jawad Anani

reported on the outcome of a visit by a Jordanian delegation to the European Commission in Brussels in which it discussed the conclusion of a partnership agreement with the European Union (EU).

According to Mr. Lawzi, the two sides are expected to procure solutions for all outstanding issues in order to finalise the agreement, following an EU foreign ministers meeting scheduled for September.

Jordan may receive EU technical assistance as well as financial aid, similar to that given to the Kingdom by the United States through a peace fund, he said.

In reply to questions

posed by journalists regarding the prospect of the government holding a dialogue with the Muslim Brotherhood to discuss the latter's recent decision to boycott this year's elections, Mr. Lawzi asserted that the government is amenable to dialogue with all political groups.

There may well be a meeting between the prime minister and Brotherhood leaders but no fixed date has yet been set, he added.

Concerning exports to the Palestinian self-rule areas, the minister confirmed tripartite meetings grouping Jordan, Palestine and Israel to resolve the situation.

Jerash festival kicks off tonight

By Tanya Habbouja
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Subsequent to centuries of invasions, earthquakes, disintegration of its precious stones, the Jerash North Theatre will ring with music and dancing once again as the Jerash Festival for Culture and Art kicks off tonight.

Transylvanian folkloric dancing, Tchaikovsky's "Sleeping Beauty," and orchestral music, from all over the world, will be performed in the ancient ruins of the theatre for the first time in over 2,000 years.

Once buried seven metres underground, a team of international archaeologists began scouring the city's ruins in 1925, uncovering the history and beauty of the ravaged theatre.

Archaeologists agree the theatre was inaugurated for musical performances in 164 A.D., holding poetry readings, town meetings, and modest performances during the golden age of the Roman Empire.

Excavations revealed a partially eroded inscription bearing the name of Empress Julia Mamaea and her son, Emperor Sevrus Alexander, who reigned over the eastern Roman province from 222 A.D. to 235 A.D. before his death in a military coup.

Emperor Constantine I

converted to Christianity in 333 CE, and the age of the Byzantines began.

As Christianity flourished, churches and chapels were constructed throughout Jordan.

"The Byzantine era brought about the initial deterioration of the North and South theatres as citizens focused on church building, leaving the theatres to crumble," Head of Jerash Excavations at the Ministry of Antiquities Abdul Majeed Mujely told the Jordan Times.

As Arab tribes strengthened and Prophet Mohammed spread the faith of Islam, the Byzantines began to lose control over Jordan, Syria and Palestine.

Muslim armies entered the Transjordan highlands and won the final battle against the Byzantines along the banks of the Yarmouk river 636 CE, forcing Byzantine troops to retreat to Anatolia.

By the seventh century CE, the North Theatre was in a sad state of affairs, used as an industrial complex for pottery production.

"A series of devastating earthquakes throughout the early and mid-eighth century was the final blow for the theatre," according to archaeological expert Rami Khouri.

As half-buried stones crumbled and intricate marble was destroyed, the the-

atre was rediscovered by German scholar Ulrich Seezen in 1806, prompting many international archaeologists to begin excavation projects.

The Jerash National Project brought a team of American, Australian, and British archaeologists together in 1982 to begin extensive excavations and renovations. Now monitored by the Ministry of Antiquities, the beauty of the North Theatre has been restored in what Mr. Mujely described as its original state.

"We are witnessing more activities, groups, and an awareness of the antiquities — people are gradually appreciating Jerash," Mr. Mujely said.

The North Theatre can seat as many as 2,000 people for musical and dance festival performances.

The first music to break these past centuries of silence will be the French Orchestra de Jeunes de la Mediterranee this Friday.

The dancing groups Chilean Bafochi and Russian OMSK Ballet will perform in the theatre as will orchestras from Canada, Poland, and the European Union.

A full programme is available at various hotels, tourist agencies, and at the Haya Cultural Centre in Shmeisani.

WHAT'S GOING ON

JERASH FESTIVAL

*Performance of Jordanian folkloric songs at the South Theatre at 8:30 p.m.

*Display of handicrafts and sculptures at the Columns Street and Zeus Vault.

*Performances by local, Arab and foreign bands at the main square.

CONCERT

*Musical performance by Baghdad Group at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh at 7:30 p.m.

LECTURE

*"Wadi Ramm Recovery Project" by Denise Dudley, Vicki Karas and Barbara Reeves at the American Center of Oriental Research (Tel. 846-117) at 7:00 p.m.

FILM

*"Playdays on the Move" at the British Council, Jabal Amman at 5:00 p.m.

1997 'Progress of Nations' report inaugurated in Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) yesterday launched its 1997 Progress of Nations report.

The following is Her Majesty Queen Noor's statement:

We launch today UNICEF's "1997 Progress of Nations" report, one of UNICEF's three flagship publications, which highlights children's rights to survival, development, protection and participation — the four cornerstones of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Each year, by charting the progress achieved since the 1990 World Summit for Children, the "Progress of Nations" reminds governments and the world community that the rights and needs of children must remain an international development priority.

This year's report outlines many notable developments in child health, nutrition, education and children's rights throughout the world but also highlights six major areas of concern: The quality of basic education; people's access to hygienic sanitation; the effect of AIDS on child death rates; violence against women and girls; juvenile justice; and the protection of breast-feeding from unethical practices to market infant formula.

Today, 140 million children are not in school and almost one billion adults, two-thirds of them women, are illiterate. While access to safe water is increasing, almost half the world's population — nearly three billion individuals — do not have access to decent latrines.

Despite an impressive

decline in mortality rates among children under five, 1,000 children around the world die from AIDS every day.

In many countries, legal systems offer no special protection to young people who face harsh punishments when they come in conflict with the law.

While the reduction of formula feeding and improved breast-feeding practices could save an estimated 1.5 million children each year, the 1997 report lists only 16 countries which have achieved full compliance with the code of baby formula marketing.

I hope particular attention will be paid to UNICEF's statement that increasing violence against women and girls is "the most pervasive violation of human rights in the world today."

Every year in India nearly 5,000 women are killed for dowries; in the Middle East and Latin America women are murdered in "crimes of honour," and every nine seconds in the United States, a woman is the victim of physical abuse due to domestic violence.

On behalf of the government and people of Jordan, I would like to thank UNICEF for its ongoing active commitment to address these challenges and its steadfast efforts to promote a global ethic that gives priority to children and women.

With UNICEF's help, 80 per cent of the world's children have been immunised against six childhood killer diseases, child death rates have been halved, and since 1960, 20 million deaths have been averted.

With the commitment and support of the Jordanian fam-

ily, government, non-governmental organisations and international agencies, Jordan's current immunisation rates for polio and measles are over 90 per cent, iodised salt consumption is 75 per cent, 98 per cent of the population has access to safe water and 77 per cent to adequate sanitation, net basic school enrolment rates are 92 per cent (of whom 78 per cent reach grade five) and only 9 per cent of births are underweight.

All are significant achievements within our region and in the context of global development. Breast-feeding is initiated immediately after birth by 94 per cent of mothers, though unfortunately many discontinue well before the recommended six months. This year two of our largest public hospitals, Al Bashir Hospital in Amman and Badi'a Hospital in Irbid, were certified as baby-friendly and I very much hope that the number will increase.

Although in December 1996, the Ministry of Health requested the banning of all forms of breast milk substitutes, close monitoring and compliance remain lax and several steps are still needed to ensure that the international code is adopted.

The National Task Force for Children (NTFC), a national coalition of dedicated individuals, private sector, government, NGOs and international agencies concerned with children, was established in 1995 to coordinate national efforts for children and promote the implementation of both Arab and international conventions on the rights of the child and the Jordanian Plan of Action.

The NTFC has developed a

national research centre that gathers information, identifies unmet needs and suggests innovative programmes to better protect the needs and rights of children in Jordan.

The NTFC is currently reviewing and re-drafting the "Childhood Act," a comprehensive law for the protection of children based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was ratified in May 1991.

Children's rights lie at the core of human rights for the 21st century and, as a unique representative of the aspirations of the world's children, UNICEF continues to successfully promote the implementation of the rights of the child from universal acceptance to universal observance.

As we gather here to launch the 1997 Progress of Nations report, we celebrate what we have achieved for our children but, more importantly, we continue to identify the challenges that lie before us in implementing child rights and addressing gender equitable human development — challenges that we all must shoulder together.

The following is a statement given by UNICEF Representative to Jordan Dorrit Alopaeus-Stahl

Your Majesty, excellencies, children (from the 17th Arab Children's Congress, invited to attend the event) and other partners in development, friends of all ages here today, allow me to introduce to all of you the 1997 report on the Progress of Nations.

Progress of Nations is about sustainable human development.

In this time of major and welcome United Nations reforms I find it appropriate to rely on UNICEF's sister agency, the United Nations Development Programme, who identified this development, and I quote:

"Sustainable human development is development that not only generates economic growth but distributes benefits equitably; that regenerates the environment rather than destroying it; that empowers people rather than marginalising them. It gives priority to the poor, enlarging their choices and opportunities, and provides for their participation in decisions affecting them. It is development that is pro-poor, pro-nature, pro-jobs, pro-women and pro-children."

The annual UNICEF publication on the Progress of Nations therefore ranks the nations of the world according to their achievements in child health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation, and progress of women.

In 1997, the Progress of Nations report carries both good news and bad, as Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF, says in her foreword. In the Jordanian context this translates into impressive advances in child health and survival, in children's nutrition, including micronutrients, in the almost universal care to mothers at delivery, in very high enrolment rates in schools for both boys and girls, in the diligent work for the well-being of children and women based on national plans and with emerging mechanisms for the empowerment of both.

Thus: Jordan ranks among the first in access to safe water and adequate sanitation and

is in the forefront when it comes to immunisation coverage (well over 90 per cent) and also in effectively addressing micro-nutrient deficiencies, including universal salt iodisation; Jordan's net school enrolment rate in the basic cycle is above 90 per cent for both girls and boys; and non-governmental members of a coalition, including the many for the advancement of women.

But there are gaps and problems remaining, highlighted in the Progress of Nations report.

In Jordan, we also know that:

- acute respiratory infection is still a major killer of children;
- too many women die because of insufficient care, particularly after delivery;
- too many babies are still deprived of the physical and emotional benefits of sustained breastfeeding;
- too few children are reached with those precious early childhood development activities;
- too many students have difficulties in placing themselves high in learning achievement tests;
- too many young persons have difficulties in finding themselves a job after education;
- too little support and services still reach those with a disability, and their families;
- although few in number, 25 per cent of those infected with HIV are under 19 years of age;
- the judicial system for children who come in conflict with the law, is not yet structured to cater to their special needs of protection;
- the quickly urbanising society has yet to take deci-

sive steps towards "healthy cities — healthy children" with safe playgrounds and other special considerations given to children;

"Too much ignorance, silence and inaction surround the tragedy that lies in every single case of child abuse and violence against children and women."

It is not the number, per se, because the known numbers of abuse and violence against women and children in Jordan are fortunately comparatively low, which compel me to highlight this last tragedy focused on in the Progress of Nations report.

But it is because we, in Jordan and in UNICEF, have found that the tragedy does hit Jordanian children and women even today.

We have the duty and the possibility to address the concept and trauma of violence wherever it occurs in order to end the violence and help victims restore their dignity as members of their families and contributors to the development of their nation.

The Progress of Nations 1997 identifies violence against women and girls as "a construct of power and a means of maintaining the status quo."

"Gender violence is also a major health and development issue, with powerful implications for coming generations as in society in general. Eliminating this violence is essential to constructing the paradigm of human security."

There are, says the report, "compelling reasons why the issue cries out for urgent and fervent public attention."

"... domestic violence reaches menacingly into the next generation. Children of violent fathers are often

physically abused alongside with their mothers. In addition, studies show that children of violent parents are more apt not only to repeat that behaviour with their own offspring, but to commit violent acts in the larger society."

"... if the systematic oppression of women and girls is tolerated widely at the familial level, society at large will be shaped accordingly."

"... it is a matter of public health. Violence debilitates women and girls physically, psychologically and socially, sometimes with lifelong results."

"... family violence affects the healthy development and productivity of all societies... women's aspirations and achievements are powerfully inhibited, not just by injuries of physical attacks but by the implicit threat of male violence."

By exposing the intolerable, a publication like the Progress of Nations report is a contribution to ending it, taking a step towards constructing the precious paradigm of human security.

By intensifying our joint efforts in the way the programmes of cooperation between UNICEF and our Jordanian partners are evolving, with studies, discussions, actions within the well-known sectors such as education and health, as well as on increasingly pressing concerns regarding human dignity and protection from abuse and violence, we can in our turn help ensure the same paradigm and achieve real, sustainable human development in Jordan.

KABUL (AFP) — A growing tide of civilians were fleeing towns north of the Afghan capital as fierce battles raged between Taleban and rival forces, with anti-Taleban fighters claiming gains around a key district center.

Residents streaming south from the battle zone reported an overnight attack by fighters loyal to anti-Taleban strongman Ahmed Shah Masood on the town of Qarabagh, 50 kilometres north of here.

A spokesman for Mr. Masood claimed a Taleban defence line north of Qarabagh has been broken, with ex-government fighters advancing to the northern edge of the key district centre.

"The Taleban had established a defence line around Qarabagh which we broke today," Abdullah told AFP by satellite telephone.

The main road leading south from the frontline was lined with at least one thousand local villagers evacuating the battle zone carrying whatever possessions they could manage in the summer heat.

By midday Tuesday, the frontlines were booming with the sound of artillery exchanges, as the belligerent factions pounded each other's positions. But Mr. Abdullah said there was very little infantry movement.

"The Taleban are putting up very little resistance, except for Pakistanis and Arabs," Mr. Abdullah added, reiterating the claim that Taleban ranks are flush with foreign Islamic mercenaries.

The claims could not be independently confirmed, as reporters attempting to reach the frontline were blocked by highly tense Taleban at a post 19 kilometres south of Qarabagh.

A group of the puritanical fighters, unwilling comment on the latest developments, AFP correspondents with a stick.

Medical workers were bringing in a firm heavy fighting jet, highlighting the fear of possible bombardment.

The town's residents were unable to confirm the exact position of the Taleban line due to the intensity of the bombardment.

Residents fleeing the town, Abdullah said the title agricultural valley the journalists and hit that the combat zone vest — the front line local economy — twelve in-badly disrupted. "The fighting is too gerous." "Out" — livat — could be destroyed — of Kabul.

farmer Mohammad — Taleban seized Kabul — last year, and are — the northern-based factions — and the ex-government for the remaining one-third of Charikar — 64 kilometres — the country not under their north of here — and a —

SUKHUMI (R) — The leader of the breakaway Georgian region of Abkhazia Monday rejected a call by the Georgian government to be deployed in the region and warned his forces were ready to repel any attack.

"The Georgians can propose (an international force) as much as they like, but we will reject this idea," Abkhaz leader Vladislav Ardzinba told Reuters in an interview.

Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze, currently in the United States, is trying to drum up Western support for an international peacekeeping force for Abkhazia to complement or replace a Russian force currently patrolling a buffer zone.

He was scheduled to meet U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan Monday to advance his proposal for a "multinational, wide-scale" peacekeeping mission for the region.

On Friday, the former Soviet foreign minister told reporters after talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton that the United States would "actively participate" in a broader approach to reaching a peaceful end to the trouble in Abkhazia.

A new round of U.N.-sponsored peace talks is due to start this week in Geneva.

Russia has 1,500 peacekeepers in a buffer zone along the de facto frontier between Georgia and Abkhazia. Their mandate expires on July 31. Georgia says they must leave after that if they do not agree to do more, including policing a wider zone and helping ethnic Georgian refugees from Abkhazia to resettle.

So far the Russians have refused, saying the Abkhaz should also agree to the new mandate. The Abkhaz are bitterly opposed.

"There will be no replacement for the Russians if they leave," Ardzinba said Monday, adding that the idea of an international force on his territory was an attempt by the Tbilisi government to use foreign states to do its bidding.

"Georgia wants to use the world community to do to us what they could not do during the war," he said.

Many observers fear that the departure of the Russians could mean a renewal of the bitter 1992-1993 conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia which claimed at least 10,000 lives.

"The Georgians should be more interested in the presence of the Russians than anyone. They should understand that one spark could restart the war," Mr. Ardzinba said.

He said about 50,000 ethnic Georgians who live in the so-called security zone policed by the Russians would likely feel compelled to flee their homes if the peacekeepers left.

"These people in the zone could again become refugees on their own," he said.

Georgians, like their own people like no no-fodder," he said.

Mr. Ardzinba said his armed forces were more than a match for Georgia's rebuilt military. "Our army is ready to guard its frontiers. We will defend our territory just like we did during the last Georgian aggression," he said, referring to 1993.

Abkhazia has put its forces on alert in advance of the July 31 deadline on the Russian mandate. Unarmed men with Kalashnikov automatic rifles were fanning out along the region's main seaside highway over the weekend.

Georgia lost Abkhazia, lush subtropical Black Sea region in the northwest of the mountainous country, when its disorganized militia was driven out of the area in 1993 after a year of fighting. The region has since run itself as a de facto independent entity though no state has recognized it.

Peace talks, mostly initiated by Russia, have failed.

The United Nations has 150 military observers in Abkhazia.

But diplomats say that Western leaders would be willing to risk Moscow's possible displeasure by sending peacekeepers to Georgia, which still hosts Russian military bases, and which Moscow continues to see as part of its strategic underbelly.

by death squad

BOGOTA (R) — A right-wing death squad massacred about 30 people and injured others in a remote village of eastern Colombia, Red Cross and local officials said Monday.

The attack took place in Mapiripan in Meta province over the weekend, but only after the head of the Red Cross in Meta province told Reuters the death toll was not yet known because bodies were scattered in isolated parts of the surrounding countryside.

The mayor of Mapiripan said the massacre had been at least 30 people, but he did not know exactly how many died there are still we can re-cover the corpses," Mr. Torbeaum said in a telephone interview.

President Ernesto Samper said the government condemned the massacre in a statement and said a team of investigators and human rights officials had been sent to the area.

The national government, headed by President Samper, deplores this vile massacre of humble citizens. We are endeavoring to find out first-hand the circumstances of this massacre that has humiliated the nation," the

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australia came under fire from South Pacific nations Tuesday over the disclosure of a report highly critical of island leaders.

"We thought Australia was our friend and mentor, but now we must re-examine this friendship in light of this latest development," said Marshall Islands Acting President and Finance Minister Ruben Zackhras in a statement. The 93-page top-secret report, which referred to some Pacific leaders as incompetent and corrupt, was obtained by a journalist at a meeting of economics ministers from the 16-nation Pacific Forum in Cairns this month.

Fiji's Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka said the way in which the report was made was a show of disrespect.

The Marshalls, current Forum chairman, said the document "has created shock and dismay among our countries and has severely damaged Australia's standing in the Forum community."

Mr. Zackhras' statement said the government has earned the document contains many "disparaging slurs" about island leaders, including the country's late President Amata Kabua.

"As a member of the Forum, and while supposedly being in a friendly and cooperative partnership, the Australian government has allowed the prejudice and intolerance on the part of some of its senior officials to come to the fore," Mr. Zackhras said.

"We have our own Forum, we have our own way of talking to them and for that report to be made the way it was, I believe, is a show of disrespect," Mr. Rabuka told the Fiji Times.

There were suggestions in Australia that the report could be discussed at a Forum summit meeting scheduled for Rarotonga, Cook Islands, in September.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard has yet to decide whether he would attend the Rarotonga meeting, his spokesman said.

After last year's summit in the Marshall Islands, Mr. Howard indicated he did not feel it was necessary to attend the Forum on an annual basis.

Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer, who could be expected to go if Howard did not attend, criticised the tone of the assessments.

"The language in the document is certainly not the language I'm familiar with," Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer said. Views in the report, which were also highly critical of the economic situation in Pacific nations, "reflect the government's views."

Speaking from Delhi, India, in a radio interview, Downer said Australian diplomats were spreading that message around the region in an effort to minimise the fallout.

"I wouldn't talk extravagantly in terms of damage. I would just simply talk in terms of it being an unfortunate incident but these things blow over," he said.

Opposition leader Kim Beazley said Mr. Downer's confidence that the row over the document would fade was misplaced.

"This has poisoned the well, there is no question about that in terms of our relationships in the region," Mr. Beazley said.

Mr. Fischer told reporters it took too early to say what had happened.

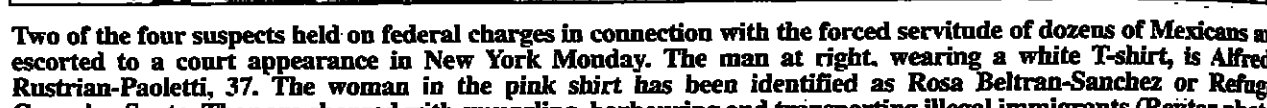
Municipal council employee Luis Prieto told a right-wing death squad arrived in the village last week and later carried out the killings.

The paramilitary gang was coming in and out of the village for the last few days when they began killing. At least 25 or more have died but we have been able to go out into the rural area near the village to check," Mr. Prieto said in a phone interview.

Mr. Prieto said a gang of 100 paramilitaries were found within the village boundaries — at least two of them had been beheaded, Mr. Prieto said. Local media reported that the gang had tortured other people and threatened to mutilate them with chain-saws.

Witnesses said a gang of more than 100 paramilitary fighters entered the village, killing three people in the process and dragging others to more isolated areas for murdering them.

The village was scrawled graffiti with the words "death to the guerrillas" and "united self-defence groups of Colombia" on a village sign.



MEXICO CITY (R) — Mexican officials Monday disputed claims by New York police that dozens of Mexican deaf-mutes they rescued had been held in allegedly slavelike conditions, and said the immigrants could have left anytime.

Enrique Loezaa Tovar, Mexico's chief of consular affairs, told a news conference that some of the rescued deaf-mutes had been in recent contact with Mexican consular officials in New York and reported nothing of the "bondage and virtual slavery" described by New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

"They were there on their own initiative, voluntarily, and apparently were not constrained or obliged to stay," Mr. Loezaa said.

Despite the sharp differences between the official Mexican and New York accounts, he said Mexican authorities were "following the investigation step by step, minute by minute."

New York police arrested seven people and were searching for a suspected leader of a ring that allegedly recruited deaf-mutes from Mexico to go to the United States, where they were forced into servitude, selling trinkets on subways and turning over nearly all their cash to the ringleaders.

Four people were arraigned in New York Monday, charged in a conspiracy to bring, transport and conceal illegal aliens.

New York officials reported freeing 57 mostly deaf Mexicans, including 12 children, from two crowded and squalid apartments in the borough of Queens Saturday.

Mexico Monday said 62 Mexicans were involved, and 10 of them were children.

The ring was exposed Friday when two deaf mutes walked into a police precinct with notes detailing their plight.

The accounts continued to send shockwaves throughout Mexico Monday, drawing outrage from politicians and ordinary citizens despite the varying accounts.

New York police said they were searching for the alleged ringleader, identified as Reinaldo Paoletti. Four other members of the Paoletti family were arrested.

Family members of one suspected Paoletti victim, 22-year-old deaf-mute Ismael Santiago Garcia, said he was persuaded by a Paoletti to travel to the United States and trusted the man as an honest benefactor. The Paoletti they knew appeared to be deaf, which increased their confidence.

The mother, Juana Ofelia Garcia, said she last contact

with her son last December when he sent her pictures of a trip to the Stame of Liberty.

"I have lived in anguish not knowing about my son," she told Reuters from her modest home in a working-class Mexico City suburb. "I'm leaving everything God."

The founder and director of a Mexico City school for the deaf, Jose Badillo Huerta, said he knew one of the suspects, Adriana Paoletti Lemus, and that she was hard of hearing.

He said he was not sure she had been part of recruitment ring, but he noted that the deaf in Mexico were easy prey for schemers. Many are illiterate and discriminated against, he said, and women are sometimes forced into prostitution.

MONROVIA (AFP) — Former warlord Charles Taylor maintained a clear lead late Monday in Liberia's presidential elections, as trailing candidate Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf softened her allegations of electoral fraud.

A host of international observers from the European Union (EU), the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the Carter Centre declared Saturday's polls to be free, fair and peaceful.

When results of 45 per cent of votes cast were released Monday night, Mr. Taylor's National Patriotic Party won 65.38 per cent of the 261,533 votes tabulated so far, according to the Independent Elections Commission (IECOM). Trailing considerably with 15.78 per cent of tabulated votes was the Unity Party of Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf. None of the 11 other parties contesting the poll won more than four per cent of votes tabulated so far. The endorsement from the poll monitors came the day after Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf made serious allegations of electoral fraud, implicating former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, in "the hanky-panky," a charge Mr. Carter denied.

On Sunday evening, as Mr. Taylor emerged with a clear lead, Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf alleged that widespread malpractice by ECOMOG, the West African peacekeeping force deployed in Liberia, rendered the vote fraudulent. But in comments to the press Monday, as Mr. Taylor consolidated his lead and observers deemed the poll free and fair, the former finance minister dropped her allegations and said she needed more time to confer with her party agents.

"Once we have the majority of our reports in and we feel that we understand the situation we will be in a better position to be able to take a definitive position on our acceptance or our rejection of the election results," said Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf. "Should it come to us becoming an opposition party in this country, we must remain a strong and constructive opposition that is working towards helping our people return to normal lives (...) to start the process of development (...) reconciliation and economic reconstruction," she said. Mr. Carter said in a statement on behalf of the centre he set up in Atlanta in 1982: "In the face of tremendous challenges the Liberian people have conducted a peaceful and orderly election, and turned out in very high numbers to vote, and collection and reporting of returns should lead to an accurate count."

At a press conference later, he spoke of a "remarkably successful election process," and said there was no reason to doubt that the final tally of votes "would be completely honest and accurate."

The statement and Mr. Carter's remarks were endorsed by representatives of the EU and the Organisation of African Unity.

Former U.S. Senator Paul Simon, a member of the Carter Centre delegation, said the presidential and legislative polls, the first since 1985, were "a remarkable feat you have achieved under very difficult circumstances."

"I go away cautiously optimistic, hopeful for the future of Liberia," he said of the small West African country brought to its knees by seven years of factional conflict.

The poll "was free, fair and transparent and will reflect the will of the people," said the OAU's Paul Rupa.

The thrust of Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf's claims was that ECOMOG, the West African peacekeeping force deployed in Liberia since 1990 and at polling sites across the country Saturday, had been over-zealous in the assistance provided to voters, to the extent of depriving them of their true choice.

While Mr. Carter and other observers noted irregularities involving ECOMOG, deeming them "inevitable in any election," they were not considered greatly significant.

"We certainly have not been involved in any hanky-panky," said Mr. Carter.

Mr. Simon urged the totals of 13 presidential candidate dates to show post-election unity for the sake of the country.

"It is important that those who lose do not aggravate the fears of people, for winners and losers have to go responsibly if we are going to build a better Liberia," he said.

Saturday's election is meant to formally end brutal civil war ignited in December 1989 by Mr. Taylor. IECOM announced it would release further results Tuesday evening.

DHAKA (R) — Flames soared after a rise in pressure at a Bangladesh gas field and authorities said Tuesday tight restrictions on movement around the blazing field.

"Movement has been restricted following a sudden rise in gas pressure since Sunday," said one official with Petrobangla, the state-run oil and gas corporation.

Reporters at northeastern Maulvibazar town, close to the Magurchara gas field, said they saw flames up to 12 metres high Monday afternoon causing panic among local people.

The gas field initially caught fire on June 15 during drilling by U.S. company Occidental Petroleum Corp.

Occidental brought in fire fighting equipment and experts from Singapore and the United States, but the blaze had almost died down naturally before the company began fighting the fire.

The flames had dwindled to less than 1.5 metres high last week.

Energy Ministry officials had said the June 15 accident occurred when a rig hit a "trap gas" layer at a depth of 840 metres, forcing a

blaze that ravaged two kilometres of surrounding forest and destroying tea plantations.

An official inquiry into the accident is due to be completed this week.

Newspapers, quoting Occidental officials at the drilling site, said Tuesday a sudden rise in gas pressure was detected at the field early Sunday.

Gas started leaking from dozens of holes in the ground and bubbles were seen in the mud around the field.

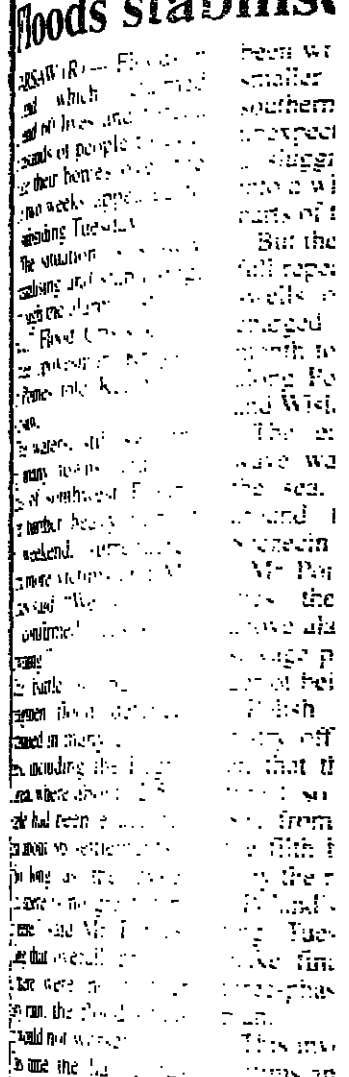
Occidental has already removed equipment from the site which it has identified as the cause of the

accident.

"The location of the relief well might have to be shifted. The pressure (of the gas) is suddenly much higher," said Petrobangla Chairman Mosharraf Hossain.

Occidental officials Monday placed tight restrictions on movement near the gas field and nearby railway services were suspended.

The company began drilling at the Magurchara field early in June after it gained the rights to explore for hydrocarbons in the area.

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German soldiers repair a leaking part of the dyke which protects the village of Ratzdorf against floodwater from the Oder River, early Tuesday. After the army had worked the whole night to fight back the floods, officials announced that the village might have to be evacuated if the floodwaters rise (Reuter photo)

Floods stabilise in Poland, threaten Germany

WARSAW (R) — Floods in Poland which claimed around 60 lives and forced thousands of people to evacuate their homes over the last two weeks appeared to be subsiding Tuesday.

"The situation is slowly normalising and stabilising, although the alarm is still in force," Flood Crisis Committee spokesman Krzysztof Pomes told Reuters in Warsaw.

The waters, still swamping many towns and villages of southwest Poland after further heavy rain at the weekend, surrendered eight more victims and Mr. Pomes said: "We now have 60 confirmed cases of drowning."

The battle to build or strengthen flood defences continued in many communities, including the Legnica area, where about 12,500 people had been evacuated from about 86 settlements.

"So long as the dykes hold, there is no great danger here," said Mr. Pomes, adding that overall, provided there were no further heavy rain, the flood situation would not worsen.

This time the havoc has

been wrought largely along smaller rivers. The central southern town of Kielce unexpectedly suffered when a sluggish stream swelled into a wide river inundating parts of the centre.

But there was no sign of a full repeat of the rampaging swells of high water that charged northwards this month to wreak destruction along Poland's major Odra and Wisla waterways.

The earlier Odra River wave was at last reaching the sea, threatening areas around the port city of Szczecin in the north.

Mr. Pomes said five localities there faced waters above alarm levels and two sewage plants were in danger of being flooded.

Polish Environment Ministry officials say, however, that there is no serious threat so far to the Baltic Sea from pollution due to the filth being washed into it by the rivers.

Poland's cabinet was meeting Tuesday morning to make final decisions on a three-phase reconstruction plan.

This involves fast relief to victims and disease preven-

tion measures, medium-term reconstruction of infrastructure, such as schools, hundreds of shattered bridges and torn roads, followed by a long-term plan to protect against future flooding.

Meanwhile, in Frankfurt-An-Der-Oder, Germany, crests of flood-soaked dykes on the Oder River gave way Monday but were repaired with sandbags in a desperate battle against time as the region expected a visit by Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

More than 1,500 monitors and rescuers were involved in raising dyke levels on the border river's German bank, with crests dangerously close to the floodwater.

At Brieskow-Finkenheerd near the industrial town of Eisenhuettenstadt, a dyke crest was washed away over a length of 14 metres but was filled with sandbags.

A nearby transformer station which provides electricity for Eisenhuettenstadt's population of 50,000 was safe.

Authorities expected the water to rise another half metre over the next days

after fresh weekend rains in Central Europe.

Later Tuesday, Mr. Kohl was to visit the Brandenburg state border region where about 200,000 people are affected by the floods.

In Ratzdorf, at the junction between the Oder and Neisse rivers, water levels reached at a record 6.81 metres, eight centimetres more than Monday night.

Part of a dyke near Ratzdorf was also washed away. Twenty kilometres downriver at Frankfurt, the flood rose to 6.32 metres, a mere three centimetres below a 1930 record.

At Eisenhuettenstadt — between Frankfurt and Ratzdorf — a record 7.06-metre mark was reached — half a metre over its highest level ever.

Rescuers said floods were rising about a centimetre an hour Tuesday morning and were expected to continue to rise over the next hours.

Daylight also gave rescuers a chance to act more quickly as helicopters could be used to monitor the region.

Royalist Cambodian troops on push south — Thai army

PHNOM PENH (R) — Forces loyal to Cambodia's ousted first prime minister have won full control over a key northwest town and are pushing rival government troops south toward another strategic village, Thai and Cambodian military said Tuesday.

Government officials in Phnom Penh, who said Monday they still controlled the key town of Samrong, said they had no information on any offensive by forces loyal to first Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh.

But a Thai officer at the Cambodian border said Prince Ranariddh's forces had taken Samrong town,

about 30 kilometres from the border, and territory further south, sending about 30,000 Cambodians fleeing the fighting between soldiers of those forces and troops loyal to Second Prime Minister Hun Sen.

Mr. Hun Sen ousted Prince Ranariddh in a coup just over two weeks ago after driving the prince's forces from Phnom Penh, but sporadic fighting between the two sides has continued in the country's northwest.

"Soldiers loyal to Ranariddh have overrun Samrong...and are now heading to Chong Kal Town South of Samrong. They expect to capture it soon," the Thai

officer told Reuters. Chong Kal is roughly 25 kilometres south of Samrong.

Artillery and mortar fire could be heard from the border Monday afternoon, but the sounds of fighting were less intense Tuesday, he said.

Mia Pot, a 36-year-old Cambodian who said he was a royalist soldier, told Reuters by telephone from his hospital bed in Thailand that Prince Ranariddh's forces had taken Samrong late Monday.

Mr. Mia Pot, who was suffering from a leg wound, said eight other Ranariddh soldiers had been wounded in the fighting near Sam-

rong. He and the others were recovering in a Thai hospital near the border, he said.

About 30,000 Cambodians who fled the fighting were stranded in a town one kilometre from the Thai border, the Thai army officer said.

He said Thailand was preparing a receiving area in Surin province to handle the refugees should the fighting get worse.

Two generals contacted in Phnom Penh said they were awaiting an update on the situation in and around Samrong, but as of their last intelligence reports, thought the government still controlled the area.

Taiwan: China Sea drills are no cause for alarm

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan's Defence Ministry said Tuesday it had seen nothing in Communist China's July naval manoeuvres that should alarm people on the Nationalist-ruled island.

"The Defence Ministry closely monitors all of the Communist forces' exercises and training activities. Our compatriots can set their hearts at ease," said spokesman Kung Fan-Ting.

"Every year the Chinese Communist navy conducts routine military exercises in major training sea zones, and such exercises are always given extensive coverage," Mr. Kung said.

State-funded Taiwan Television said defence officials had described the July 10-20 People's Liberation Army exercises as "just a routine drill, involving no live fire."

That description contrasted with Beijing's own assessment, issued Monday by the China News Service, which said the PLA navy had mounted the "biggest contest in military techniques at sea since the all-forces contest of 1964."

China's East Sea Fleet, tasked with defending the mainland's eastern seaboard, would be in the front line of any conflict with Japan or Chinese Nationalist Taiwan — a well-armed thorn in Beijing's side since a 1949 civil war left them divided.

The fleet held more than a week of competitive reviews of its combat ability, the state-funded agency said.

The drills involved submarines, destroyers, escort vessels, landing craft and other ships and tested China's sailors on more than 100 drills, including use of guided missiles, torpedoes, rockets and underwater guided weapons, it said.

Taiwan, which last put its military to test with live-fire games just days before Britain handed Hong Kong back to China on July 1, said its own drills "had no political implications for the Hong Kong handover."

Taipei and Beijing have been rivals since 1949, when the Nationalist Republic of China and its army, routed on the mainland by Communist forces, fled into exile on Taiwan.

Two decades of market reform have given Beijing the financial means to modernise its military, the world's largest at three million troops, prompting Taiwan in turn to spend billions to build one of Asia's most advanced armies.

China menaced Taiwan with repeated rounds of live-fire war games in the Taiwan Strait over eight months in the run-up to the island's March 1996 presidential election, even firing unarmed missiles at targets outside Taiwan's main

U.S. envoys to brief Seoul on North Korea visit; Cohen issues warning

SEOUL (R) — Two senior U.S. emissaries flew into Seoul from North Korea Tuesday to offer what South Korean officials hoped would be fresh insights into Pyongyang leaders' thinking ahead of key four nation talks next month.

U.S. officials said the two, influential former Senator Sam Nunn and former ambassador to South Korea James Laney, met Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-Ha to discuss their meetings in the exclusive North.

Senior officials from the two Koreas, the United States and China are due to meet in New York on Aug. 5 to set an agenda and other procedural details for their peace talks.

South Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman Lee Kyu-Hyung said by telephone he expected Mr. Nunn and Mr. Laney to convey North Korea's response to U.S. and South Korean policies towards the talks.

He gave no details but other Seoul officials said Mr. Nunn and Mr. Laney were expected to provide fresh insights into North Korean leaders' way of thinking as the Stalinist state prepared for the formal appointment of its leader Kim Jong-Il.

On July 8, Pyongyang announced the end of mourning for "Great Leader" Kim Il-Sung, paving the way for his son, Mr. Kim Jong-Il, to take over as state president and general secretary of the ruling Workers' Party.

The two posts have been left vacant since the senior Kim's death three years ago.

"Nunn and Laney's feedback will help us fine-tune our stand in the four-party talks," a Seoul government official said, asking not to be identified.

"They did not take any secret deals to North Korean leaders but in view of their influence in the United

States, they could have personally assured sincerity of our plans," he added.

Seoul has said it is willing to offer large-scale economic assistance to the North once Pyongyang agrees to detente.

U.S. government experts accompanied Mr. Nunn, who once headed the Senate Armed Services Committee and is a respected American voice on national security issues, and Mr. Laney, who recently retired as U.S. ambassador to South Korea, during their two-day visit to the North.

Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported that Mr. Nunn and Mr. Laney met Vice Foreign Minister Kang Sok-Ju and Lieutenant General Ri Chan-Bok, chief of the Korean People's Army Pannunjom mission, Monday.

"At the talks views were exchanged on issues of common concern in further improving the DPRK (North Korea)-U.S. relations and an agreement was reached on some important problems," KCNA said in a report monitored in Tokyo.

The agency gave no details of the agreement.

U.S. officials have said the two men were not in Pyongyang to negotiate on any issue, but would discuss food aid and explain the U.S. position on four-way peace talks.

North Korea watchers in Seoul said Mr. Nunn and Mr. Laney's visit to Pyongyang signalled that Washington might be ready to improve ties with Pyongyang if it took steps to reduce tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

Last week, Washington made a goodwill gesture, doubling its 1997 food aid to the north to \$52 million from \$27 million.

Analysts said North Korea's leadership faced the urgent task of easing hunger in his country before Mr. Kim Jong-Il formally as-

sumed top state and party posts.

"North Korea wants better ties with the U.S. and Japan in a bid to rescue its collapsing economy," said Lee Jong-Seok, fellow at the Sejong Institute, a private think-tank.

"Pyongyang initially responded negatively to the four-party talks. Now it appears that it will try to use the talks as a bargaining card," he said.

Meanwhile, in San Francisco Monday, U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen said that if the North Koreans were "insane enough" to launch an attack against South Korea they could cause tremendous damage but would be destroyed in the process.

The United States has the military capability to carry out two major regional conflicts nearly simultaneously, Mr. Cohen told a meeting of the Commonwealth Club of California and the World Affairs Council of Northern California.

He said the United States had the capability to deter aggression in Korea. "Will it deter aggression? We don't know at this point how long it will do so," he said in response to a question from the audience.

"We're hoping we can persuade the North Koreans to come to the peace table, the bargaining table, to see if we can't arrange for some sort of accommodation, a soft landing so to speak. They are going through some very difficult times," he said.

North Korea is struggling to survive widespread famine. North and South Korea are divided by a heavily-fortified border and 37,000 American troops are stationed in the South.

"If they were to be insane enough to attack, they could do tremendous damage in the very short run, but they would be destroyed in the process," Mr. Cohen said of North Korea.

U.K.'s Blair faces new pressure over IRA truce

BELFAST (R) — British Prime Minister Tony Blair faced fresh demands Tuesday from political leaders of Northern Ireland's majority Protestant community angered at the terms of a new ceasefire declared by Irish Republican Army (IRA) guerrillas.

Mr. Blair was due to meet Ian Paisley and other leaders of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), second biggest of the pro-British Protestant parties in the province.

They insist Sinn Fein, political wing of the Irish Nationalist IRA guerrillas, must not be allowed into Northern Ireland peace talks without a commitment from the IRA to hand in its guns.

Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the DUP, told reporters: "The prime minister has to be told that the people of Northern Ireland do not accept IRA/Sinn Fein coming into a process holding onto their guns, without giving any commitment of the permanency of their ceasefire."

He added: "I think we would want to talk to the

prime minister about how we might have a proper talks process with constitutional legitimate parties."

Northern Irish Protestants have expressed scepticism at the IRA ceasefire declared Sunday because it makes no reference to a permanent truce in its 28-year struggle against British rule.

The last ceasefire, declared in August 1994, was broken 17 months later when the IRA exploded a huge bomb in London's Docklands area, killing two people.

Hardline Unionists have said their political leaders should not sit down with Sinn Fein, which is now expected to be let into the peace talks following the IRA truce.

Leaders of the Orange Order, an influential organisation in the Protestant community, threw the peace process further into doubt Monday when they called on all Unionist parties to pull out of the talks at Stormont Castle in Belfast at once.

Orange Lodge Grand Master Robert Saulters, described the peace process

as a "poisoned chalice."

He called for "all Unionist parties to withdraw immediately in an act of unity and solidarity from the Stormont talks, the existence and purpose of which is to solely satisfy the insatiable demands of the Republican agenda."

Unionists have been angered by the prospect of the IRA's ceasefire winning Sinn Fein a seat at the peace talks without the guerrillas being forced to turn in their weapons.

One of the smaller Unionist groups has already pulled out of the talks and the future of the negotiations depends on the reaction of the mainstream Unionist parties.

Northern Ireland's leading Unionist, David Trimble, leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), told Mr. Blair Monday that the IRA must start handing its arms in or peace talks would fail.

But Mr. Trimble, who was to have further telephone contact with Mr. Blair Tuesday, stopped short of pulling out from the talks.

Jeffrey Donaldson of the UUP said Unionist politicians must not allow Sinn Fein to take over the peace process.

"We're not going to allow Sinn Fein/IRA to set the agenda," he told the BBC. "The democratic parties of Northern Ireland have got to take control of this process. After all we represent the majority of the people."

A further session of the peace talks was due to take place Tuesday before the participants vote Wednesday on a joint proposal from the British and Irish governments that decommissioning of guerrilla arms be tackled by a subcommittee in parallel with political negotiations.

The UUP has already made clear it will not vote for this proposal as it stands. Sinn Fein, which convinced the IRA it was worth calling a ceasefire, says the handing over of weapons should be part of a final settlement, not ongoing negotiations.

Sinn Fein negotiator Martin McGuinness said at the weekend that the IRA would not hand in a single bullet.

Western countries demonise Mr. Karadzic, who has been charged by the U.N. War Crimes Tribunal.

"Such a portrayal of the Serb leader helps the international community to arrest and even kill Serb patriots. Her attitude prompted the world media not to talk about Karadzic as a leader of the Serb nation but as a criminal," the statement said.

Earlier this month NATO pounced on two suspected war criminals who were allies of Mr. Karadzic. Bosnian Serb media accused Mrs. Plavsic of causing political turmoil which allowed NATO to strike.

Bosnian Serb president vows to stay in office

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic vowed Monday to stay in office and accused Serb hardliners of kicking her out of the ruling party because she had exposed high-level corruption.

Mrs. Plavsic was expelled from the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) at the weekend by allies of ex-president and indicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic who also called on her to step down as president.

"I was not suitable for the party because I was merely insisting on resolving the crime problem in the Serb republic," Mrs. Plavsic said

in a televised speech. "Such widespread crime is the reason why the state cannot pay its workers and pensioners," she said.

Mrs. Plavsic has been locked in a power struggle with Mr. Karadzic's allies ever since she publicly accused them of plundering the territory through vast smuggling rackets.

The SDS has demanded she hand over authority to the vice-president, but Mrs. Plavsic said she would only step down if she was voted out in a referendum, as required by the constitution.

"I will lead the state in accordance with the Bible

and constitution until the people cancel my mandate. My term expires in 1998 and only the people can deprive me of my mandate," she said.

Mrs. Plavsic had initially refrained from criticising Mr. Karadzic directly but the crisis has now become more and more of an open conflict with the ex-president, who wields power covertly from his headquarters in Pale, outside Sarajevo.

The government, which answers to Mr. Karadzic, attacked Mrs. Plavsic on the evening news programme before her speech.

A government statement said Mrs. Plavsic had helped

Western countries demonise Mr. Karadzic, who has been charged by the U.N. War Crimes Tribunal.

"Such a portrayal of the Serb leader helps the international community to arrest and even kill Serb patriots. Her attitude prompted the world media not to talk about Karadzic as a leader of the Serb nation but as a criminal," the statement said.

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Fresh violence erupts in Spain over ETA killing

MADRID (R) — Lingering tensions over the killing of a young politician by Basque separatists have erupted into a fresh wave of violence.

After a week of nationwide protests against the rebel group ETA, clashes broke out in the Basque region late Monday when opponents attacked sympathisers during an illegal march to mark the suicide of an ETA inmate.

ETA struck back at widespread condemnation of its killing of Basque town councillor Miguel Angel Blanco, with a grenade attack early Monday near a police station in northern Spain, slightly injuring one person.

As the government vowed to smash the guerrilla group, Spain's High Court handed down long sentences on three Basque guerrillas convicted of plotting to kill King Juan Carlos.

Juan Jose Rego, his son

Ignacio Rego and Jorge Garcia, who admitted they had the king in their rifle sights three times, were sentenced to a total of 109 years in prison.

Monday's developments were proof that tensions are still running high after ETA kidnapped and killed 29-year-old Blanco earlier this month when the government refused the group's demand to transfer about 500 ETA inmates to Basque prisons.

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Juan Jose Rego, his son

the two sides and broke up the gathering called by ETA supporters after rebel inmate Juan Carlos Hernandez was found hanged in his cell with his hands loosely bound in an apparent suicide.

ETA's political wing Herri Batasuna blamed Hernandez's death on the government's refusal to bring ETA inmates scattered around the country back to Basque prisons.

"Once again the body of a Basque prisoner has been found lifeless in his own cell," Herri Batasuna said in a statement. "It was the prison policy of the government that killed Juan Carlos Hernandez."

In February, another suspected ETA activist awaiting trial in prison was found hanged in his cell with his hands and feet bound in what the government called a suicide. Thousands of Basques protested against what they said was murder.

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How the police can protect us

ALTHOUGH DRIVERS may find the latest road-side police checks on their licences a nuisance, the purpose is no doubt well-meaning. Likewise, the motorcycle officers posted at major intersections may, or may not, act as a deterrent to those drivers who find it necessary to approach and proceed through these intersections at breakneck speed. But the route to stemming the pile-up of road accidents — fatal, injurious and costly — involves many more acts of vigilance, which, if implemented, would perhaps drive home the point that the authorities really mean business.

Traffic police, often seen driving almost leisurely in the right-hand lanes of major thoroughfares, rarely pursue drivers committing moving violations. These hazardous offences include tailgating, switching lanes without proper signalling, zigzagging between lanes, wrongful overtaking, and swerving at the last possible second from the furthestmost left lane across the middle and right lanes to take an exit route. Penalising such culprits might make them think twice about driving carelessly.

A sharper eye should be kept on driver education school instructors, whose qualifications certainly come into question when their students appear to be encouraged towards blatant violations of basic traffic rules. Road etiquette is not the issue here; the perilousness of driving is.

Although it has been complained about time and again, there continues to be a major affliction in the shape of public transport vehicles, whose drivers take to the roads as if by divine right. The various concerned authorities in this track seem to do little more than pass the buck. Here again, there is no intent to jest. Motor vehicles are not donkeys, they can be lethal machines in the hands of the reckless.

The need for vigilance by the traffic authorities can never be overemphasised. Drivers who abide by the rules have nothing to fear when pulled over and as such should appreciate more sincere efforts to keep the country's roads safe for motorists as well as pedestrians. When the number of road accidents declines significantly, it will be the best indication that stepped-up efforts by the police are paying off.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Sabeel weekly defended the Muslim Brotherhood's decision to boycott the 1997 general elections, saying that the Brotherhood did the right thing by responding to the feelings and the aspirations of the Jordanian masses. Suleiman Tarawneh said that the Brotherhood's move is not tactical nor is it a way to score any successes, it is rather a clear response to the feelings of the man in the street who does not believe that democracy can be safeguarded under the present temporary laws which restrict freedom. The Muslim Brotherhood realises that the coming parliament will be serving the interests of the United States and the Israelis, under the temporary laws, and it realises that, like during the 1993 general elections, rigging is bound to happen, said the writer. The Brotherhood realises that the present government is in place just for carrying out the general elections which are steered towards making Jordan an Israeli protectorate and, therefore, the Brotherhood opted to boycott the elections that are bound to take the country into the unknown, he charged. Indeed, the decision to boycott the elections came in response to the demands of the people of Jordan and not those of the Brotherhood members, according to the writer who said that the people are not interested in elections that are not expected to be fair and free by any standards.

A WRITER for Al Aswaq criticised the world governments in general and the Palestinian leadership in particular for maintaining contacts with the Netanyahu government while realising too well that it is against peace and does not have any respect for the peace accords. Rashid Hassan said it seems that everybody, even the Israeli opposition, is in agreement over the fact that Mr. Netanyahu is determined to ruin the peace process despite all the calls on Israel to change its policies and stop the Jewish settlement programmes. It also seems that all governments are in agreement that the present Israeli government is determined to kill the Oslo accords, does not approve of any U.N. resolutions and is firmly determined to retain the occupied territories in the three Arab countries, he continued. Noting that even the Americans are not happy with the Netanyahu government's behaviour, the writer said that, unfortunately, Palestinian leaders are maintaining secret and open meetings with the Israeli prime minister and members of his government, which have yielded nothing except further humiliation. The writer said that negotiations should stop and world government leaders ought to refrain from dealing with the anti-peace government of Israel because such contacts only serve as a reward for its actions.

Washington Watch

Senate hearings — nothing new, but the issue of campaign finance reform has been pushed aside

By Dr. James Zogby

AT THE end of the first two full weeks, the U.S. Senate hearings into 1996 campaign finance irregularities have thus far failed to generate significant public interest.

In the months leading up to the opening of the hearings, Republicans were hopeful that the sessions would create major problems for the Democrats and the White House. And Democrats became increasingly concerned as new stories would appear almost daily suggesting improprieties and illegalities in their 1996 fund-raising efforts.

In part, it has been due to this extensive advance coverage that these hearings have been largely ignored. In the case of the famed Watergate hearings of 1974, each new day's hearing generated revelations that shocked an unaware public. The nation became fixated on the unfolding drama that began with a Republican-engineered break-in of the Democrat's headquarters and ended with a motion to impeach then President Nixon.

By now, the story of the Democrat's 1996 fund-raising is well-known. In a nutshell, the story is as follows: In an effort to amass a substantial war chest to elect the president, the White House and the Democratic National Committee (DNC) developed a plan to raise large amounts of money for the 1996 campaign. To do so, potential campaign contributors were offered inducements to give, or after

they gave a contribution, were rewarded. In some cases, the reward was on opportunity to meet the president or vice-president in a social setting or spend time at the White House. In addition, the DNC hired new fund-raisers and pressed them to reach out to previously untapped potential donor groups. One of the fund-raisers in question was John Huang, an Asian American, who raised millions of dollars for the Democratic Party, much of which now appears to have been illegally derived from foreign sources. While these are also suggestions that Huang may have maintained some foreign ties while employed by the administration and some have even raised concerns about espionage, these issues have not been connected either to the White House or the DNC and are the subject of an ongoing investigation.

What has continued to dash Republican hopes for the hearings have been more recent revelations that have found Republicans guilty of many of the same illegalities and irregularities in 1996 and even in 1992. Even more disturbing to the Republicans has been that while Democrats have already returned about three million in contributions they have determined to be illegal or improper, the Republican Party is thus far refusing to do the same with the roughly \$3 million they received that also appear to have been illegally given.

A third factor complicating Republican efforts to have the hearings generate news is that they have been upstaged by other stories: the expansion of NATO and the president's triumphant visit to the new NATO countries; the continuing battle over the new federal budget, and the recent failed coup attempt to oust Republican Speaker Newt Gingrich by some disgruntled congressional Republicans. In any case, as the hearings enter their third week, the Republican leadership will be under mounting pressure to produce some major developments to justify the significant expense of convening the sessions. From the outset, the Democrat's arguments against the hearings have been threefold. First, they argued, the issues that the hearings sought to explore were already known and were already under investigation by law enforcement agencies. Second, Democrats argued that since Justice Department investigations were under way, Republicans could not justify spending \$6 million to hold hearings that appear to be telling only what is already known. Finally, the Democrats maintained that since the problem of campaign finance irregularities was bi-partisan, the hearings should be truly bi-partisan, focusing on both Democrat and Republican abuses and leading to real campaign finance reform that would address the problem in the future.

What is most interesting is that while the attention of the Senate has been focused on these hearings with Republicans attacking and the Democrats defending (although on Wednesday, next week, Democrats will be given a rare opportunity to interrogate witnesses regarding a 1992 loan to a Republican Party organisation by a Hong Kong company), the issue of campaign finance reform has been pushed aside.

There was hope earlier in the year that revelations of big money in politics and abuses in fund-raising in the 1996 campaign would both outrage the voting public and move the Congress to reform the political system. A bi-partisan bill was proposed that would reduce the amount of money that could be raised in campaigns, reduce the amount that needs to be spent in campaigns and create a more level field between incumbents and challengers. The president endorsed the bill and urged Congress to pass it by June 30.

That date passed and instead of legislation to reform politics, the public got the hearings that are currently under way. One main reason why the Congress has not been eager to move forward on reform is that each of these elected officials is a product of the system the public wants to see changed. In some ways, the system is so polluted by money, it appears impossible to change. Many newspapers, for example, the day before the hearings began,

profiled each of the senators who were members of the Senate Committee. In each case, the senators in question had raised millions of dollars for their last election. In many cases, they had received contributions using some tactics used by the White House: calling donors from their offices, offering large donors private meetings and other benefits. And in some cases, they had also received support from some of the very same illegal sources that were to be investigated in the hearings.

In the 1996 election, almost \$2 billion was raised and spent by candidates and both parties. While the Democratic Party raised over \$220 million, the Republican Party raised over \$400 million. In such an environment where such enormous sums of money have become necessary to run campaigns, it is logical to expect abuses. And where money is so needed and is able, therefore, to buy influence, it is not surprising that the Chinese government and some foreign businesses and businessmen would seek to use money to buy influence in the system.

The new story is not the abuses, those are known — it is whether or not the Senate can transcend partisan attacks and "politics-as-usual" and take effective measures to reform a system badly in need of change.

LETTERS

Win through self-reliance

To the Editor:

I HAVE noted many instances of writers in the Jordan Times mentioning the standards of our "founding fathers." Regrettably, a more thorough search of American history will reveal that the U.S. is the most successful colonial settler state of all time. Indeed, most of the Americas, named for Amerigo Vesputti, a European, fell to the onslaught of the white man who dispatched there native inhabitants by the millions. This was justified by calling them "savages," and not fit to live. Let there be any doubt of the church's position on the matter, there were plenty of Papal pronouncements to the justification of killing "heathens", that is non-Christians.

The "founding fathers" themselves were land owners, and the original rights of citizenship were mainly for that class. Women and slaves were excluded.

Did things improve later? Well, the Indians — the European name for the native peoples of the Americas — were given smallpox-infested blankets to keep themselves warm.

The U.S. also waged war early against the North African states — something about "freedom of the seas." But they did not declare war against the British when that nation used to stop the American ships and impress the American seamen to serve on British frigates.

And who was it that decided on "total war"? How many women and children lost their lives during the two world wars with the concept of war on the "enemy population"? Certainly this was a far cry from the Rules of Engagement that were formulated by the first Caliph, Abu Bakr, to not harm the women and children, but stick to defeating the enemy army. And yet, the Arab World, and the Muslim World, is still looking for help to the same people — the Europeans and the Americans.

Lastly, who can possibly justify the continued starvation of the Iraqi people and the wholesale slaughter by starvation of 4,000 to 5,000 Iraqi children under the age of 5, except the present American secretary of state who said on the "60 Minutes" programme that it was worth it?

This is the same country who used the atomic bomb twice on Japan, a Japan near defeat. One of the cities was even a Christian city.

The only way that the Arabs and Muslims are going to win out is to do what they should have done a long time ago. Unite and rely on themselves. As someone who has visited the region more than once, and who is a specialist in researching the region, I know that the talent is there. Why not make use of it?

S. B. Cassidy
RIVME @pacbell.net

Speeding up exit

To the Editor:

I AM an American who recently visited Jordan for 24 hours as part of a worldwide business development tour and I feel duty bound to point out that my processing at arrival at the Queen Alia airport was by far the slowest in comparison to Switzerland, Cyprus, Lebanon, Israel, France and Japan.

There was one person processing visas to everyone who had just come off the plane; the passport line afterwards was very slow.

It was only after I got impatient that the head of security and then several officers came into the

booth to urge the people processing visas to speed things up a bit.

This whole business of selling what amounted to \$30 entry and exit stamps to foreign tourists at the borders (I exited through Sheikh Hussein Bridge) along with 20 per cent hotel taxes and service charges needlessly wastes people's time, makes a horrible first impression and ought to be stopped if Jordan wishes to compete in the world of international tourism and make its airport less of a nightmare for business and social travellers.

Jordan might also consider the concept of a transit visa used in such countries as Lebanon so that people, such as myself, who enter for less than 48

hours do not have to pay anything.

It took me an hour to get out of the airport; the other airports took 10 minutes. The best anyone could tell me in consolation is that Saudi Arabia takes two hours.

Unless you can do better, I would probably go out of my way to avoid flying into your airport. In any event, this was my third visit to your beautiful country (though my first arrival by air) and I hope for many happy returns.

Ivan Clement,
U.S.

Woman — the 'guilty' party

To the Editor:

AS I am firmly opposed to any government or state possessing the authority to sentence any of its citizens to death, I was quite relieved to hear that Ahmad Dakamseh was sentenced to life imprisonment and is no longer under threat of execution.

Still, I have to wonder why the life of a man who admittedly killed seven children was spared when just a few months back two women were

hanged at Swaga prison for killing a man who was described as both physically abusive and mentally cruel in the extreme, as well as a philanderer who tormented his wife with tales of his amorous conquests.

Among the reasons proffered for Mr. Dakamseh's conviction of manslaughter, as opposed to murder, was, apparently, heat exhaustion and "sexual frustration" because his wife had recently given birth.

I believe the juridical message here is unambiguously — a woman who has endured a past of horrific abuse has no recourse and, indeed, will be severely punished for her crime, whereas a man who has killed seven little girls can claim sexual frustration as a plausible line of defence as his woman was not "servicing" him properly.

Carolyn Azzam,
Amman.

Stand proud, work hard

To the Editor:

HAVING READ two letters related to domestic workers in Jordan: "Mutual respect makes all happy" and "No judgment without proof" (Jordan Times, July 7, 1997), I thought I should express my point of view on the subject.

Employers and employees have their own stories to tell. We, as contract workers, regardless of the nature of our work, have to bear in mind that it is on our own accord that we are here. When we arrive in a foreign country, it is difficult to predict what awaits us. So it very much depends on us, on how we accept and try to overcome whatever we

have to go through, to make our stay easy or not. One should be reminded that even when helpers are being treated as member of the family, they still are domestic workers.

If need be and if one feels strongly about an issue, one can argue with the employer, but in a calm, persuasive manner. If one is on the verge of quitting, then one should consider the best alternative. We should know our limitations, rights and privileges, but always maintain the composure and keep the limits.

While maintaining our dignity, we should also work hard, be honest, endure and persevere. We should look up and be proud because, when it

comes to work, this reality cannot be denied: we, Filipinos, are the best workers.

To comment on the above-mentioned letters, I can only say that people (employees and employers alike) are not all the same. And lastly, this is an Arab country, we should be more flexible, try to adopt our employers' ways and respect their beliefs. We might be of different upbringings, cultures, traditions and norms, and it might be really difficult to adapt, but we worship the same creator.

E. P. Soldevilla,
Amman.

Complication of automation

By Ali Kaseasy

A WEEK ago, on Saturday, I had the opportunity to practise one of the greatest pleasures available to many Jordanians: go to the international airport to catch an outbound flight.

As a 'staunch' believer in advance planning and preparation, I presented myself at the check-in counter a little earlier than the required two hours before take-off, complete with my embarkation card filled out and signed. I was informed with smiles that the latter precaution was unnecessary, since the card system had been discontinued. In their constant quest to bring to us all that is best, and to keep pace with the latest advances of modern technology, airport authorities introduced a new state-of-the-art automated system, by virtue of which information would be entered from the passport directly into the computer.

The smiling official omitted to inform me, however, that thanks to this major leap forward into the realm of twenty-first-century computer-integrated-information-systems, I would need every second of the two hours just to get through passport control.

This was Murphy's law in action: Every solution creates new problems worse than the original ones. You see, the new system was devised in order to cope with the added work-load of a rising number of arrivals and departures, on a limited number of already overworked airport staff. The objective of the system's designers was to minimise the time that each passenger would need to spend in the presence of the immigration officer, which, according to warped Western minds, would make life easier and more pleasant for both parties concerned.

This line of reasoning is anathema to our famed Jordanian hospitality and to our sense of concern for, and solidarity with, our fellow man, which always propel us to find new ways of maximising and prolonging human contact. We simply had to devise a way of satisfying this noble urge.

Now the hardware and software came in a user-friendly tamper-proof package, and it would have been too bothersome to start fiddling with either. That would have been too much like work. However, the man-machine interface was an easy soft front that lay wide open, virtually crying out to be penetrated. It was here that we made our breakthrough. We simply made sure that the computer operators received no training for the task required of them.

The official in charge of keying in the information was very presentable, courteous, devoted to his work, and friendly in the extreme. He also gave every indication that he would wake up every night for the rest of his life sweating and screaming from a nightmare in which he was handed a passport and a computer and instructed to copy the relevant data from one to the other.

Upon taking charge of each passport, the poor man directed a look of utter resentment at the screen facing him, then, with forefinger outstretched, he knocked down to his ordeal. Each letter and digit received careful and extended scrutiny, followed by a prolonged examination of the key board to locate the corresponding button, at which the officer would direct an impassioned stab with his forefinger, then he would smile triumphantly at the would-be traveller if the jab had found its target, but more often apologetically before resuming the scan of the key board, this time in search for the back-space key. Hunt, peck, smile, hunt, peck, smile, and a jolly time was had by all.

So, as I hail the airport authorities for their endeavour to upgrade and improve their services, I permit myself to request a favour: Next time there is a new time-saving improvement, please let me know in advance, so that I can make adequate arrangements to spend my entire holiday at the airport waiting for my passport to be cleared.

Burns' comments 'low blow' — Abu Medein

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The Palestinian justice minister Tuesday called the U.S. State Department spokesman's comments on his resignation a "low blow."

State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said Monday that the resignation of Freih Abu Medein might signal the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) is taking a stand against killings of Arabs who sell

land to Jews.

In May, Mr. Abu Medein caused a stir by saying Palestinians who sold land to Jews deserved the death penalty. Israel blamed the PNA for the subsequent killings of several land dealers, but Palestinian officials denied involvement.

"We had a major disagreement with the Palestinian justice minister because he condoned — publicly, on the

record, and quite openly — political assassinations for those people who were suspected of dealing land to Jews and Israelis in Israel and in the West Bank," Mr. Burns said in response to Mr. Abu Medein's resignation.

"And so I'm not sure there are many tears being shed."

"This is a low blow which shows the effect of Zionists on their [the Americans'] ideas," Mr. Abu Medein told

the Associated Press.

Mr. Abu Medein insisted the resignation was over internal ministry disputes despite Israeli media reports that he was implicated in an ongoing corruption scandal.

Although Palestinian President Yasser Arafat has yet to accept his resignation, Mr. Abu Medein said, "I am not going to budge from this decision."

King calls on Muslims to draw plan to resolve social problems

(Continued from page 1)

several Islamic institutions that would help in solving the social problems Muslims face.

The King added that among the institutions that Jordan has suggested is the International Islamic Zakat Institution and the International Islamic Awqaf Institution.

The King said the objective of these two institutions is to help Muslims overcome poverty, drought, disasters, floods and other catastrophes.

His Majesty said that Jordan also established other charitable funds to help Islamic nations during hard times.

Following the inauguration ceremony, His Majesty presented two checks of \$10,000 each to the winners of the King Abdullah Bin Al Hussein Annual Prize. The 1997 prize went to two Egyptian scholars Mustafa Emarah and Abdul Fatah Mustafa Ghaneimah.

Addressing Islamic scholars taking part in the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilization Research (Al al Bayt Foundation) during a luncheon at the Royal Court, His Majesty Crown Prince Hassan, the RAICR

honorary president, outlined the need to promote Islamic moderation and tolerance by promoting the more than 640 studies and research projects carried out by the academy.

Prince Hassan called for entering the next century equipped with a set of Islamic values, reflecting the actual and tolerant picture of Islam. The Crown Prince voiced hope that the next millennium will witness great Arab and Islamic contributions to the world civilization.

Noting that the United Nations next year will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, Prince Hassan said the definition of human rights should be all-encompassing and comprehensive to include religious, social and political rights, adding that it should not be based on the definition of a certain party.

During the conference, 18 research papers will be reviewed by 75 delegates from 27 countries. The papers focus on problems facing Muslim immigrant families in Europe and the United States, Islamic pedagogy, the effect of the media on children, refugee issues and children's rights.

In addition to the King and Crown Prince, Prime Minis-

ter Abdul Salam Majali and other ministers attended the inauguration ceremony.

Among the dignitaries attending the conference are the Grand Imam of Al Azhar in Egypt, Sheikh Mohammad Sayid Tantawi, the secretary general of the Organisation of Islamic Conference, Ezzidin Al Iraqi and the chairman of the Khoei International Foundation, Abdul Majeed Khoei.

Meanwhile, the Grand Imam of Azhar reiterated his support for the Palestinian people and called upon Arab and Muslim countries to help the Palestinians gain their legitimate rights.

"Our brothers in Palestine are demanding their rights. They want their land back and their full freedom," Sheikh Tantawi said to reporters following the inauguration ceremony.

He refuted Israel's claims on Jerusalem and said that the holy city should be in the hands of Muslims and Arabs. "Jerusalem should remain a Muslim and Arab city. Muslims and non-Muslims should live safely in Jerusalem and perform their religious rituals freely and without fear," he added.

U.N. disarmament chief visits site outside Baghdad

(Continued from page 1)

"there should no serious conflict" between Baghdad's security concerns and UNSCOM inspections of sensitive sites.

He is to open talks with Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz on Wednesday and has said he would travel to Baghdad every two months, like his predecessor Rolf Ekeus who was a hate figure in Iraq.

Baghdad, which accused Mr. Ekeus of spying for

the United States, has vowed to make a fresh start and cooperate with his successor, who was Australia's ambassador to the United Nations.

Under the cease-fire terms of the 1991 Gulf war, the oil embargo in the U.N. sanctions can not be lifted until UNSCOM confirms Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear arsenal as well as long-range missiles have been destroyed.

Israel's opposition wins symbolic Knesset victory

(Continued from page 1)

with him on peace moves and last month promised him the job of finance minister only to recant at the last moment.

According to Mr. Sharon's proposal, the Knesset members would be able to remove a prime minister by a simple majority of 61 out of 120 lawmakers without also risking their own seats — as opposed to the 80 votes currently needed to achieve this.

Under existing legislation, a majority of only 61 seats would bring on elections for both prime minister and the Knesset itself.

The proposal, which is supported by most of the opposition, is considered to have good chances of commanding a parliament majority.

But Mr. Netanyahu's office said Monday that its legal adviser believes that passing such a fundamental change in existing legislation would require a special Knesset majority of 80.

S. Africa's racial divisions refuse to go away

CAPE TOWN (R) — Three years into the new South Africa, many white Afrikaners complain they no longer feel at home in the country of their ancestors.

They do not necessarily support the National Party which maintained apartheid for four decades from 1948, but feel President Nelson Mandela's ruling African National Congress (ANC) caters only for the interests of the black majority.

Deputy President Thabo Mbeki highlighted the issue in a speech to parliament last month, saying questions of race and colour still ran through South Africa like a fault line.

He linked the racial divide to Archbishop Desmond Tutu's truth and reconciliation commission, saying: "The hatreds and animosities of the past will not go away unless the truth is told about what happened."

Perhaps the single most striking symbol of Afrikaner alienation in the new South Africa was the decision by the National Party in April to boycott the commission, which it accused of pro-ANC bias.

But the divisions go beyond party politics and many political commentators agree they are beyond the scope of the truth commission.

"Perhaps it would have been better to have said it is the people who must achieve reconciliation," said Chilean author Ariel Dorfman in an interview during a recent visit to South Africa.

"A commission cannot reconcile a country that is not ready for reconciliation," said Dorfman, whose own country went through a similar process of dissecting a past marked by oppression and division.

"I come to South Africa at a time when divisions of the past threaten to turn this into two nations for a long time... Reconciliation means that those who did wrong are prepared to ask for forgiveness and recognise their responsibility."

There lies the rub. Much of the debate over healing the racial divide has focused on black perceptions that whites should be more contrite, in contrast to the belief of many whites that they have apologised enough already.

The ANC denounces apartheid as a crime against humanity, but political scientist Hermann Giliomee said some Afrikaners would take issue with that.

Referring to a group of Afrikaner academics and intellectuals who held a controversial 1987 meeting in Dakar with the ANC when it was still banned and in exile, he said: "Not everyone was prepared to brand everything that was built up in the years since 1948 as a complete disaster."

He said that socially and economically South Africa had developed greatly "and

although it was not clear whether it was because of, or in spite of, apartheid, anyone with a sense of history knew that it was advisable not to be too sure about the answer."

Mr. Giliomee described as "fiction" the ANC view that South Africa is a homogenous country where racial and ethnic divisions are irrelevant and even illegitimate.

"The 1994 election did not bear out this ANC point of view. Some 95 per cent of both whites and blacks voted for the historically white and black parties respectively," he said.

Afrikaner author Etienne van Heerden said the current political slogan of "nation building" reminded him of discredited slogans from the national party era such as "total onslaught", "apartheid" and "Christian-national education".

"Archbishop Tutu's 'Rainbow Nation' sounds more and more like an advertisement for Smarties," Mr. van Heerden said, referring to a popular brand of multi-coloured chocolate sweets.

"Many people feel like the bottom Smartie in the box."

Mr. van Heerden asked how the concept of nation building could be prevented from becoming a tool in the hands of politicians: "Isn't the concept of a 'nation' a dated leftover from the 19th century, from naive times? Should we not look for another glue to bind us?"

He said the victims of apartheid had been alienated in the former dispensation, but so had its supporters.

"The fantasy of apartheid was, among other things, a manifestation of angst about the dark unknown, of being plunged into Africa," Mr. van Heerden said.

Steven Friedman, director of the Centre for Policy Studies think tank, suggested that South Africa begin a set of structured negotiations to attain Mr. Mbeki's goal of getting blacks and whites to see the country's problems in the same way.

"One reason for the gulf of which Mbeki complains is that those who do not share his understanding feel alienated from the new order because they feel it is government by a natural majority of which they are not a part," he said.

Including critics of the government in formal negotiations on the country's problems could make the divisions appear less intimidating, Mr. Friedman said.

"By urging a common understanding, Mbeki is acknowledging that it will be easier to reach our goals if we agree on what they are — and that is in the interests of the majority as well as the minority," he said.

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National Music Conservatory Tel: 687620
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Jett - Abdali, Tel 664146
Green Meadows for Tourism, Wasfi
Al-Tal Street. Tel. 698184
Marj Al Hammam: Big Bear Stores
Tel: 716676

McDonalds', A.Gosheh st. 859802
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Jordan, Iran review means for boosting economic ties and industrial cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Iran Tuesday opened a meeting intended to help boost economic and trade relations and to initiate joint economic projects.

The talks were conducted at the Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI) by visiting Iranian Industry Minister Mohammed Rida Nimat Zada and ACI President Khalid Abu Hassan who reviewed areas where the two sides can cooperate as well as trade exchanges and joint ventures. Speaking at the meeting, the Iranian minister expressed his country's desire to promote economic ties with Jordan and readiness to enter into joint ventures with the Kingdom.

Expressing satisfaction with the progress in economic relations, Mr. Zada said that the past two years witnessed noticeable progress as the volume of Jordanian exports to Iran rose from JD4.3 million in 1994 to JD19.2 million in 1995 and to JD22.2 million in 1996 whereas the Kingdom's imports from Iran which stood at JD5.1 million in 1994, rose to JD6 million in 1995 and JD8.2 million in 1996.

Mr. Zada said the Iranian government has discussed a draft project proposed by the joint Jordanian-Iranian economic committee in 1995 for the production of phosphoric acid and fertilisers and indicated that Tehran is awaiting the Jordanian reply for the project.

He said there are wide scopes for cooperation in engineering, industrialisation and the manufacture of industrial machinery and added that Iran is seeking to bolster its relations with Islamic and other nations and aim to

achieve an eight per cent economic growth over the coming 25 years.

Mr. Zada expressed hope that the joint Jordanian-Iranian committee, which is due to hold its meeting in Tehran later this year, will conclude agreements on preventing dual taxation, and on the protection of investments in

either country as well as open a direct air route between Tehran and Amman so as to encourage visits from and to either country by Iranian and Jordanian businessmen and merchants.

Mr. Abu Hassan said that the Jordanian industrial sector welcomes cooperation with Iran in launching joint ventures especially in chemical industries.

He said that Jordan is keen on promoting trade with Iran and on cooperation between the private sectors in the two countries.

Upon his arrival in Amman Tuesday, Mr. Zada said he was carrying a message to His Majesty King Hussein from Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani inviting him to attend the Islamic Summit Conference to be held in Tehran in December.

During his two-day visit to Jordan, Mr. Zada said he will arrange for the coming Jordanian-Iranian economic committee meeting to be held in Tehran in October.

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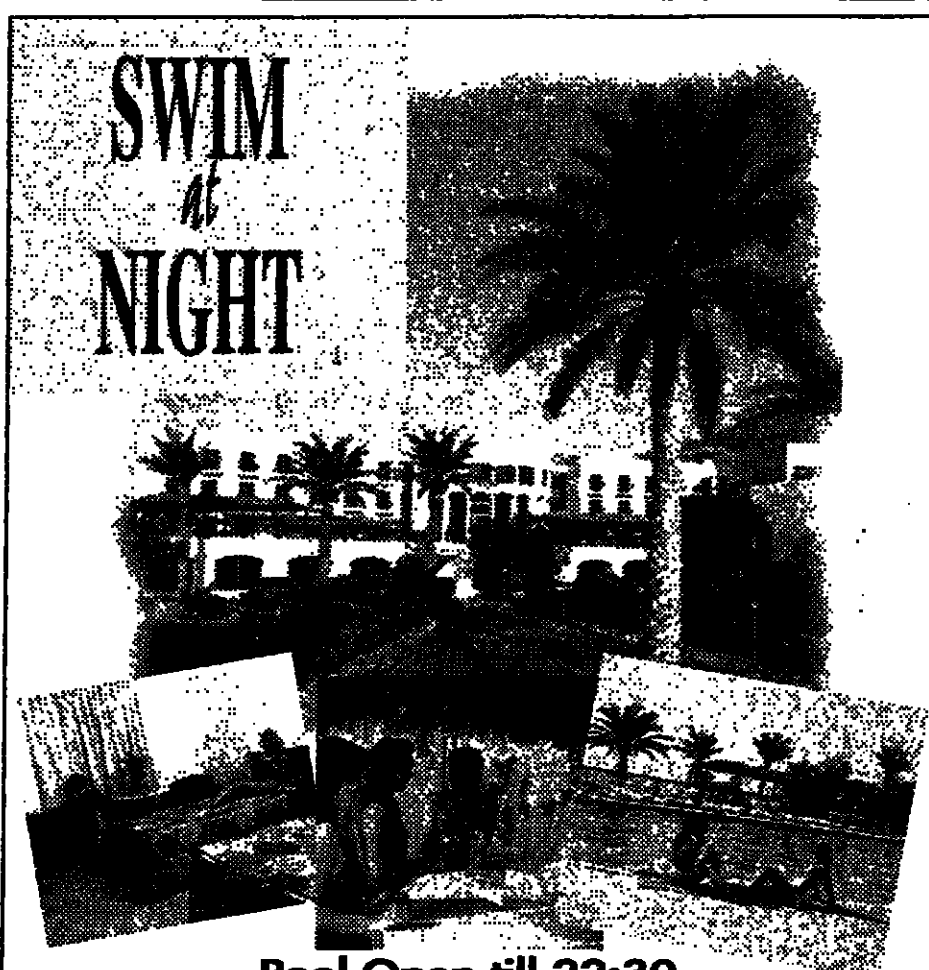
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Saudi Arabia bans import of Belgian meat

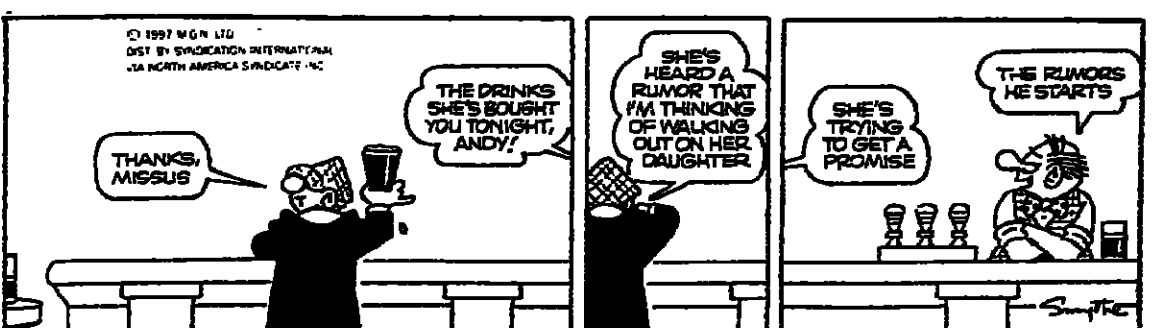
RIYADH (AFP) — Saudi Arabia has banned all imports of meat from Belgium, accusing Belgian companies of using fake certificates of origin on British beef, under an embargo because of "mad cow" disease.

Riyadh took the decision "after it was proved that certain Belgian firms acted in connivance with British producers to put false Belgian certificates of origin on meat bought in Britain," a trade ministry spokesman said Monday.

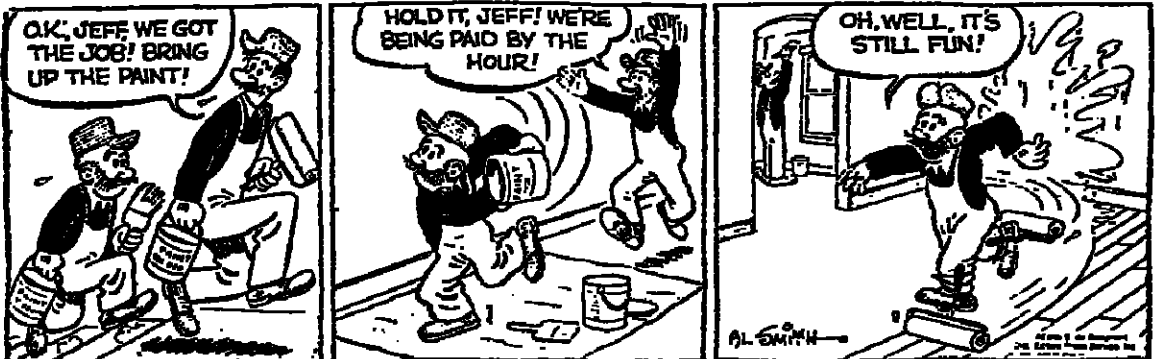
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



REUTERS

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The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates Prices as at 22/07/97 17:43

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.5125	0.5986	1.4611	115.71	1.3790	1761.80	2.0402
DE Mark	0.5517	1.0000	0.3289	0.6173	65.86	0.7606	971.37	1.1256
GB Sterling	1.6762	3.0375	1.0000	2.4824	183.52	2.3115	2951.79	3.4198
CH Franc	0.6782	1.2229	0.4028	1.0000	78.12	0.9308	1168.10	1.3758
JP Yen	0.0086	1.5652	0.5149	1.2796	1.0000	1.1910	127.20	1.4271
CA Dollar	0.7282	1.3125	0.4334	1.0706	1.19	1.0000	127.69	1.4271
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0281	0.3383	0.0840	1624.86	0.7823	1.0000	1.167
NL Guilder	0.4901	0.811	0.2922	0.7257	66.67	0.8765	862.83	1.0000
FR Franc	0.1637	0.2985	0.0978	0.24287	18.32	0.2286	33.39	33.3900

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.5125	0.5986	1.4611	115.71	1.3790	1761.80	2.0402
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	2.125	0.2973	0.5328	5.1405	0.6287	2176.55	2.5775
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1688	0.0005	0.0005	0.0005	0.0005	410.88	0.9019
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8781	0.9488	2.65	1.8781	0.9488	4067.78	4.7725
Qatar Dinar	0.2748	0.1945	0.1005	0.1005	0.1005	0.1005	423.41	0.9294
Kuwait Dinar	3.2949	2.3328	1.23579	3.2949	2.3328	1.23579	5072.43	5.9294
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	0.1021	0.1021	0.1021	0.1021	419.58	0.9208
Lebanese/1000	0.65	0.4584	0.2438	0.2438	0.2438	0.2438	2.3835	2.1660
Egyptian	0.2556	0.2093	0.1063	0.1115	1.0706	0.0897	1.0869	455.58

Metal Prices	Gold (oz's)	Silver (oz's)	Platinum (oz's)	AL (3 Months)	CU (3 Months)	Zinc (3 Months)	Lead (3 Months)	NI (3 Months)
Gold (oz's)	328.5	329	434	425	1602	1605	2318	1531
Silver (oz's)	4.34	4.36	422	425	1602	1605	2318	1531
Platinum (oz's)	4.34	4.36	422	425	1602	1605	2318	1531
AL (3 Months)	1602	1605	2318	1531	1532	644	645	6825
CU (3 Months)	2318	1531	1532	644	645	6825	6850	6850
Zinc (3 Months)	1531	1532	644	645	6825	6850	6850	6850
Lead (3 Months)	644	645	6825	6850	6850	6850	6850	6850
NI (3 Months)	6825	6850	6850	6850	6850	6850	6850	6850

Energy	Commodity	Price	Commodity	Price	Commodity	Price	Commodity	Price
Oil (bbl)	171.57	Spot	Coal (\$/ton)	1527	Spot	Gas (\$/Btu)	336.5	Spot
Coal (\$/ton)	1527	Spot	Wheat (\$/ton)	138	Spot	Soya (\$/ton)	21.84	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	138	Spot	Tea (\$/kg)	130	Spot	Barley (\$/bush)	0	Spot
Soya (\$/ton)	21.84	Spot	Rice (\$/ton)	480	Spot			
Tea (\$/kg)	130	Spot						
Barley (\$/bush)	0	Spot						
Rice (\$/ton)	480	Spot						

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

1 Freshwater fish

5 Last word

9 Cloth bit

14 Tune

15 Integument

16 Santiago's locale

17 Pittance

19 Wash cycle

20 Undivided

21 Sea eagle

22 Summon

23 Bahamas' capital

25 Utter

27 Vocal equine of TV

29 Yerevan's country

33 Scrub

36 Steak order

38 Goddess of fate

39 Ukulate

40 Turn

41 Guitar bar

42 Inventor of cordite

43 Angler's need

44 Charter

45 Courting places?

47 Iroquoian language

48 Party givers

51 President Johnson

55 Italians

58 Behind schedule

60 Japanese Beetle?

62 Pittance

64 Forehead fringe

65 And others: abbr.

68 Desperate

67 Weather word

68 DNA transport

69 Observed

DOWN

1 Chicken

2 Boxing venue

3 Ceremonies

4 Gibb

5 Add up

6 Ms. O'Donnell

7 Harden

8 "Little" (Alcott)

9 Takes as booty

10 Elliptical

11 Excavation

12 Mine or Pato

13 Pin

14 Gridiron

15 measure: abbr.

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY JULY 23, 1997

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 - April 19) Be charming and cooperative with others today, as you will probably need a favor in the days ahead. Be sure to avoid any disagreements this evening, especially with your mate and loved ones if possible.

TAURUS: (April 20 - May 20) Something may happen which will add to your career activities today, however, it can be handled if you persevere. Stick to your principles unwaveringly and thereby you can achieve the prestige which you desire.

GEMINI: (May 21 - June 21) Instead of ignoring important property or financial matters today, roll up your sleeves and tackle them. This could be a very profitable day, if you proceed with the advice of a good friend later this evening, and get a boost to your ego.

LEO: (July 22 - August 21) There is an opportunity today to gain a personal goal this evening, however, if you should not let this opportunity slip away from you, as it may be the last chance you have to achieve it.

VIRGO: (August 22 - September 22) Your energy level will be exceptional today, high this evening, and get busy and use it wisely for the day ahead. You can get the message you need, a close friend can assist you in your activities today.

LIBRA: (September 23 - October 23) A superior day today, which will occupy much of your day, spend some time talking things over with your mate and get on his or her side. Later this evening, will be good for meeting with trustworthy people.

SCORPIO: (October 24 - November 21) Your energy level will be exceptional today, high this evening, and get busy and use it wisely for the day ahead. You can get the message you need, a close friend can assist you in your activities today.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 - December 21) Before doing any business matters today, which will occupy much of your day, spend some time talking things over with your mate and get on his or her side. Later this evening, will be good for meeting with trustworthy people.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 - January 19) Your energy level will be exceptional today, high this evening, and get busy and use it wisely for the day ahead. You can get the message you need, a close friend can assist you in your activities today.

AQUARIUS: (January 20 - February 18) A few important words today, which you can go along way towards relieving the anxiety which a close friend is experiencing. If there is a special project you want to start, do so in the evening for the best results.

PISCES: (February 19 - March 20) Make an appointment with a good friend for some entertainment later this evening for a relaxing and enjoyable time. You will have a good time, and you will have a good time.

Gulf bank heads for international capital markets

MANAMA (AFP) — Manama-based Gulf International Bank (GIB) said Tuesday it had raised \$200 million through a floating rate note, the first time the bank has approached the international capital markets for funds.

The five-year floating rate note issue, arranged for GIB by Chase Manhattan International, was priced at 32.5 basis points over the London Inter Bank Offered Rate (LIBOR), GIB said in a statement.

Previously, GIB has raised funds for its own purposes through illiquid syndicated loans, but the floating rate note — which works like a bond — will be listed on the Luxembourg stock exchange and can be traded by investors.

Abdullah Al Kuwaiz, GIB general manager, said the bank chose this route "to attract non-traditional term investors in the international investing community thus opening up a much broader horizon for financing opportunities."

GIB officials said the floating rate note could prove a little more expensive to the bank than a traditional syndicated loan, but said it was mainly aimed to help raise the profile of GIB in the international market.

GIB, one of the region's leading commercial banks, reported total assets of \$8.983 billion at the end of 1996 and profits last year of \$95 million.

The Manama-based bank is a wholly owned subsidiary of Kuwait-based Gulf Investment Corporation, which is itself owned by the governments of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Arafat wants more active ties between Jordan, Palestine

GAZA (Petra) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat Tuesday called for activating joint Jordanian-Palestinian committees in all spheres, particularly in the economic field.

President Arafat, who was speaking to a Jordanian economic delegation led by Amman Chamber of Commerce President Haidar Murad, lauded the Jordanian participation in the meetings of the Palestinian expatriates

businessmen conference which was held in Gaza and Bethlehem.

Mr. Arafat pointed out the obstacles imposed by the Israeli government in the face of developing Palestinian relations with Arab states.

Mr. Arafat said Israel exports \$2.6 billion worth of goods and aims to isolate the Palestinian economy from the Arab Nation and keep it dependent on Israeli products.

Financial regulators find Internet can be a tool

WASHINGTON (R) — Federal regulators tracking con artists, price-fixing arrangements and investment abuses are starting to view the Internet as a tool rather than just the source of new problems.

The Internet and the World Wide Web it supports are forcing the government to change the way it works, and nowhere is that more obvious than in the regulation of business. The web is emerging as an effective source of tips on wrongdoing and as a way to solicit comment on government proposals.

Last year the Federal Communication Commission received 300,000 responses by electronic mail on a now-defunct proposal to permit local phone companies to

charge more for Internet access, and eventually the agency aims to give these electronic comments the same status as formal paper comment.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which traditionally has had little public involvement in its decisions on whether mergers violate antitrust laws, invited E-mail this month on the proposed merger of office superstores staples and office depot. It got more than 300 responses a day during the first few days.

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) makes no secret of its efforts to patrol the web.

"If you're a fraudster who wants attention you need to

get people to notice your web site," making it more likely the government will notice too, SEC Commissioner Steven Wallman said.

The SEC has also rapped the knuckles of several public companies for displaying misleading financial information on their web sites.

And the FTC recently shut down con men who gave out free pornographic software that surreptitiously snatched control of customers' modems and ran up international long distance phone bills. It found them through their web pages.

But it is precisely the Internet's international aspect that poses one of the greatest problems for federal regulators in this new environment.

Even with the best of intentions, businesses can find themselves running afoul of rules that vary from country to country or even among U.S. states.

For example, comparative advertising is standard in the United States but illegal in Germany. How does that affect auto ads on the web? Countries have separate rules for stock offerings and accounting procedures. How can they be coordinated?

"I think there will be no choice but for governments to become more cooperative, to communicate and coordinate with each other," the SEC's Wallman said.

Even an argument as seemingly arcane as to whether E-mail is more like a phone

conversation than a letter can have huge ramifications. For example, the SEC permits stock brokers to talk freely with clients on the phone but requires supervisors to review written communications.

"The current requirement that any E-Mail must be reviewed by a supervisor obviously makes E-mail almost useless," Mr. Wallman said. "You're not in a position to have an interactive conversation with your broker."

Mr. Wallman said such challenges require "a new style of thinking about regulation. What is the underlying goal? What are we trying to regulate? Where is the investor concern?"

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDAN											
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 22/07/1997											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
299.000	214.500	ARAB BANK	13.3	1.38	17	420	121760	293.00	290.00	3.00	
2.340	1.680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8	0.00	39	29787	62298	2.13	2.09	0.04	
5.800	4.100	CAIRO AMMAN BANK	11.8	2.63	1	150	285	5.70	5.70	-	
1.210	880	WCB EAST INV. BK.	61.7	0.00	4	1500	1415	94	94	-	
2.480	2.150	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.1	7.69	2	300	660	2.20	2.20	-	
5.700	4.400	THE HOUSING BK.	14.6	3.96	5	5300	25970	4.90	4.90	-	
4.180	2.440	JOR. INVEST. BANK	10.0	0.00	1	1000	2850	2.82	2.85	0.03	
1.050	760	JOR. GULF BANK	4.6	8.97	7	2318	1816	79	78	0.01	
3.870	3.450	ANAS JOR. INV. BK.	17.3	0.00	1	750	2700	3.60	3.60	-	
4.050	3.480	JOR. ISRAELI BANK	16.3	3.04	17	6100	24144	3.98	3.95	0.03	
1.800	1.310	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	P	0.00	10	2200	2939	1.39	1.37	0.02	
3.800	3.000	JOR. INV. FIN. BANK	20.7	0.00	3	578	1867	3.22	3.22	-	
1.440	850	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	9	0.00	3	4250	4038	95	95	-	
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 214.84	CHNG: -0.89	110	54553	252740				
3.000	2.700	JORDAN INSURANCE	12.0	5.36	3	12029	33681	2.75	2.80	0.05	
4.550	3.800	JERUSALEM INSUR.	10.9	5.00	1	1250	4600	4.00	4.00	-	
2.350	1.590	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	4.5	12.50	1	10000	16000	1.60	1.60	-	
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 113.79	CHNG: +0.63	5	23179	54281				
1.820	1.500	JOR. ELECTRIC PER.	8.0	6.02	11	4297	7091	1.65	1.66	0.01	
1.540	1.320	JORDY ELECTRICITY	8.2	8.33	1	50	69	1.38	1.38	-	
2.750	2.150	KEEFPP LINE	16.0	4.73	2	8350	22859	2.75	2.75	-	
1.550	930	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	14	14150	20515	1.49	1.44	0.05	
810	480	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	26.2	0.00	1	400	204	50	51	0.01	
3.720	2.890	ANAS INTL. INV. EDUC.	7.8	0.00	1	200	594	2.97	2.97	-	
1.520	930	ANAS EDUCATION	7	0.00	1	400	380	94	95	0.01	
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 108.52	CHNG: -0.03	34	27927	52195				
4.450	3.100	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	27.2	2.72	24	22656	91515	4.05	4.04	0.01	
4.140	2.710	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	11.1	2.50	1	950	3800	4.00	4.00	-	
7.050	4.950	ANAS POTASH CO.	15.0	3.10	4	2150	13908	6.59	6.45	0.14	
10.250	9.040	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.4	9.15	5	183	1778	9.75	9.71	0.04	
7.150	5.850	JOR. WOODST. KILLS	9.3	3.45	5	1231	7158	5.85	5.80	0.05	
4.100	3.040	ANAS PULP. MANUF.	10.9	5.06	16	3278	13216	6.00	5.95	0.05	
7.250	5.710	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	6.4	3.23	2	350	2163	6.27	6.20	0.07	
1.820	1.310	JOR. PIPES MANUF.	16.4	6.06	5	985	1313	1.32	1.32	-	
10.150	5.000	AL-BAYAN. DYNAM.	15.8	5.83	2	150	773	5.00	5.15	0.15	
5.650	4.300	DAR ALDAMA DV. INV.	13.4	4.59	10	9100	50038	5.50	5.45	0.05	
950	450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9.2	0.00	7	12750	5855	46	46	-	
1.110	1.000	AL-BAYAN. CONV. TRD.	31.2	0.00	6	3700	3774	1.02	1.02	-	
770	510	NATIONAL INDUS.	9	0.00	3	2250	1170	52	52	-	
1.300	510	INTERMED. PETRO. GRN.	9	0.00	46	43950	24267	55	54	0.01	
990	550	JOR. ROBOCORP. INDUS.	9	0.00	2	10500	5585	53	53	-	
940	530	JOR. PULP. CORP.	9	0.00	25	14800	8536	55	58	0.03	
1.670	1.120	ANAS PEARL. CHEM.	17.4	5.15	1	300	408	1.37	1.36	0.01	
1.430	740	KAWTHAR INVEST.	73.9	0.00	8	3100	2345	76	75	0.01	
2.020	1.080	UNIV. MOD. INDUS.	9	24	11	2700	2825	1.10	1.08	0.02	
1.520	1.000	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	14.0	9.62	7	1800	1872	1.04	1.04	-	
1.070	810	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	15.2	0.00	3	2000	1560	83	83	-	
2.090	1.340	AL-BAY. READY WEAR	47.5	0.00	1	400	540	1.35	1.35	-	
1.130	1.080	IND. TORACO	6.2	0.00	7	4000	4537	1.14	1.14	-	
1.260	860	UNION CR. & VEG.	40.9	0.00	11	8128	7314	90	90	-	
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 124.97	CHNG: -1.07	216	151578	256600				
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 165.94	CHNG: -0.90	365	257237	615816				
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 22/07/1997											
640	350	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	1	1000	380	38	38	-	
670	410	JOR. TRADE FAC.	11.7	0.00	10	45000	19800	43	44	0.01	
950	540	JOR. FIN. INV. CO.	8	0.00	46	72950	43693	88	81	0.03	
640	500	UNION INV. 501	9	0.00	25	78200	15640	70	70	-	
660	370	ANAS FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	13	7550	3398	46	45	0.01	
990	720	AL-BAYAN. INV. 757	9	0.00	6	15312	8288	78	79	0.01	
650	610	AL-BAYAN. 751	60.5	0.00	1	500	376	63	63	-	
730	510	ARAB FOOD & NED.	9	0.00	1	1100	561	52	51	0.01	
570	380	ANAS INTL. INV. TRD.	46.1	0.00	2	1000	400	38	40	0.02	
750	400	NAT. HOUT. IND. BANICO	9	0.00	35	39028	15813	51	50	0.01	
640	430	NAJAF. DIES & HOULDS	9	0.00	1	1650	743	43	45	0.02	
850	710	JORDAN STEEL	32.6	6.94	7	6950	8007	73	72	0.01	
580	430	ANAS ELECT. INDUS.	9	0.00	5500	2195	50	50	-		
680	550	RAJY. WELDM. 857	9	0.00	13	18270	7673	57	57	-	
800	320	INDUS. ZING.	9	0.00	4	5850	2106	36	36	-	
860	780	INDUS. CERAMIC	19.7	0.00	2	1000	750	75	75	-	
1.000	720	NAT. ALUMINIUM. 754	9	0.00	18	29400	15940	77	77	0.02	
1.020	720	ANAS INT. FOOD FACT.	36.7	0.00	1	1000	760	76	76	-	
870	590	HID. EAST COMPLEX	8.1	18.15	21	39350	24310	66	66	-	
GRAND TOTAL					208	368610	171785				

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS & HOUSING GOVERNMENT TENDERS DIRECTORATE Invitation For Bids Sector Educational Project - Phase II Central Tender No. (95/97) Compulsory Schools in Zarqa Governorate International Competitive Bidding (ICB)

The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has received a loan related to Human Resources Development Project from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development — the World Bank — and intends to apply part of proceeds of this loan to eligible payments for the schools construction covered by this invitation.

Foreign International Contractors eligible for the World Bank with proven experience in the field of school buildings within the last seven years, and local contractors classified by the Government Tenders Directorate as first grade building are invited to participate in the above mentioned tender with the following conditions:-

- Scope of Work
 - Eyal Raji Compulsory/Girls Area (2822 m²).
 - JRah Compulsory School/Girl

Jordan takes wrestling silver, bronze in table tennis doubles

Swimming results most disappointing so far

By Aileen Bannayan
and JSYIF
press committee

JORDAN ADDED two more medals Tuesday when Abdul Hakim Abu Sneineh took the silver medal in the 69-kilogramme Graeco-Roman wrestling while the table tennis team took another bronze in doubles on the 10th day of the 8th Pan-Arab Games currently underway in Beirut.

The two medals brought Jordan's medals tally to 18, with four gold, four silver and 10 bronze medals.

In women's basketball Jordan lost a chance at a bronze medal after losing to Lebanon while the men also lost to Syria and will play for 5th and 6th places (see separate story).

Abu Sneineh, who got a bronze in the 1992 Games in Syria, lost the final to Egypt's Majdi Yousef.

Jordan's Munir Sallaq was slated for another bronze medal but came in fourth in the 58-kilogramme category. He beat Saudi Arabia's Samer Kahlidi but later lost to Algeria's Hisham Abu Rdeif.

In the 125-kilogramme category, Jordan's Rashdan Nada finished fifth, while Fahd Nofal was eliminated in the first round.

After Jordan's elimination from both the men's and women's table tennis singles Monday night, Iyad Maknay and Abdul Aziz Rida came back to win the bronze in doubles Tuesday adding it to another they had clinched in the team event earlier in the competition.

Jordan beat Bahrain 3-2 (14-21, 21-14, 21-19) and then qualified to meet Arab champions Egypt represented by Ashraf Hilmi and

Ashraf Subhi who managed to beat the Jordanian duo 2-0 (24-22, 21-18) to clinch the gold after a competitive match. Qatar took the silver in shooting. Khaled Naghaway was eliminated from the top six qualifying positions after tight competition, however, it was reported that his score of 117 might enable him to qualify to the Sydney 2000 Olympics to which the qualifying score is 112.

The most disappointing results came in swimming in which the Kingdom's swimmers were far from Arab records and were thus easily eliminated from competition although some of them bettered their individual bests.

As Olympians Egypt's Rania Alwani and Syria's Hisham Masri dominated the races, Jordan's young team scored numbers that were very far from the competitive results.

In the 200-metre backstroke, Rania Ghoshel finished with a time of 2 minutes 43.24 seconds, bettering her record of 2:45.53, while Alwani took 2:27.61.

Jordan finished last in most other races. In the 4x200-metres men's freestyle, Jordan's Amer Wazani, Yazan Khouri, Faris Naser and Andre Khouri finished last with a time of 9:08.43 bettering the Jordanian number slightly while first place winner Algeria timed 7:56.93.

Hana Majaj scored a new Jordanian record of 2:44.81 in the 200-metre medley. Yazan Khouri had a new record in the 100-metre freestyle and Amer Wazani had a new time in the 200-metre backstroke.

Out of Jordan's 18 medals so far, the boxing team won

two gold medals by Mohammad Abu Khadijeh and Ayman Al Nadi and three bronze by Kamal Abdul Majid, Khalidoun Abdul Hameed and Basel Hindawi. Mousa Khalaf took a silver for Jordan in judo.

The Kingdom's medals also include a gold by Nada Kawar in the discus and a silver medal in the shot put; a gold by Fakhreddin Fuad in the high jump; a bronze by Ala' Abdul Hadi in the triple jump and another bronze by Amal Matari in the women's marathon.

Ayed Khawaldeh became the first Jordanian to win three bronze weightlifting medals; Amer Nator took silver and bronze medals in fencing and another bronze came from the table tennis team event.

Over 3,000 athletes are in Beirut for the largest gathering of Arab youth since the event was last held in Syria in 1992.

With Iraqi athletes barred from competition because of a boycott threat by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, 19 countries are taking part in the Beirut Games with only Somalia and the Comoros missing the event.

Twenty events are being contested at the Games excluding kick-boxing, handball, gymnastics, bodybuilding, hockey, diving and water polo for technical and financial reasons.

The Kingdom's 187-strong delegation which includes 94 men and 33 women athletes are competing in 14 of the 20 events. The delegation also includes 27 officials, 20 coaches and 13 referees.

Jordan dropped participation in cycling, tennis and volleyball, and will be com-

Schedule of events of Jordanian competitors at the 8th Pan-Arab Games for Wednesday, July 23, 1997

- Soccer Jordan-Kuwait (2nd round match)
- Basketball Jordan-Kuwait (men's 5-6th places)
- Taekwondo
- Swimming
- Freestyle Wrestling

Medal standings (excluding Tuesday's results)

Nation	G	S	B	Total
Egypt	53	26	21	100
Algeria	24	28	32	84
Morocco	12	12	6	30
Qatar	8	5	2	15
Tunisia	7	5	13	25
S. Arabia	5	5	16	26
Syria	4	18	22	44
Jordan	4	3	9	16
Lebanon	2	13	22	37
Kuwait	1	5	10	16
Oman	1	1	1	3
Sudan	0	1	2	3
Palestine	0	0	3	3
Bahrain	0	0	1	1

peting in athletics, basketball, karate, swimming, taekwondo, table tennis, boxing, equestrian, fencing, soccer, weightlifting, judo, freestyle and Graeco-Roman wrestling and shooting. Other events at the Games include golf and yachting.

In line with international rules, drug testing was introduced for the first time since the Arab Games were launched in 1953. All gold medalists are being tested for performance-enhancing drugs, in addition to one other competitor selected in a draw in each event.

Lebanon is hosting the Arab World's premier sports event for the first time since the 'second Arab Games' in 1957.

Jordan has received approval to host the 9th Pan-Arab Games in 2001. Kuwait was chosen as a substitute in case Jordan withdrew their bid.

Jordanian sports officials have underlined their support for organising and taking part in the Pan-Arab Games which have only been held seven times since 1953.

But the Games, designed to emphasise Arab brotherhood, were clouded by Lebanon's refusal to grant the Iraqi team entry visas for fear of provoking Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Jordan has taken part in all past seven Pan-Arab Games, gaining a total of 49 medals (7 gold, 16 silver, 26 bronze).

Jordan finished 9th overall in the last Pan-Arab Games in 1992 with 1 gold, 6 silver and 6 bronze medals.

The Pan-Arab Games were held in Alexandria 1953, Beirut 1957, Casablanca 1961, Cairo 1965, Damascus 1976, Rabat 1985 and Damascus 1992.



Rania Alwani of Egypt kisses her three swimming gold medals won in the women's 100m butterfly, the 100m breaststroke and the 4x100m freestyle at the Pan-Arab Games in Bekaa Valley of Zahle (Reuters photo)

Jordan takes on Kuwait in soccer's 2nd round tonight

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

JORDAN TAKES ON Kuwait Wednesday as the second round of the soccer competition gets underway at Camille Chamoun stadium.

The winner of the match will move to the final to play the winner of Thursday's Syria-Lebanon match.

Jordan's 3-1 win over Oman qualified them to the second round after topping Group A on score difference over Lebanon who qualified after beating Libya 2-1.

They are joined by Syria and Kuwait from Group 2. Jordan did not show offensive capabilities in their first round 1-1 draws with Libya and Lebanon.

Team coach Mohammad Awad said the team would have different tactics against Group 2 runner-up Kuwait who rely on top three players.

Kuwait had defeated Mauritania 3-1, the UAE

1-0 and lost to Syria 2-1.

Eight countries took part in the soccer event. Group 1 included Jordan, Lebanon, Oman and Libya. Group 2 included Kuwait, the UAE, Syria and Mauritania.

The top two teams in each group qualified to the second round the top two teams of which move to the final while the other two will play for third and fourth places.

The Jordan Soccer Federation (JSF) announced that sizeable rewards await players if they fare well in their upcoming matches.

Jordanian businessman Zuheir Beirut rewarded the soccer team with \$1,500 after their win over Oman and promised to reward them with \$100 each if they qualify to the final.

Taekwondo team eyes gold

As the taekwondo event gets underway today with

athletes from 13 countries taking part, Jordan's coach

Ammar Fahd said he was hopeful the Kingdom's team would fare well against the top four: Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon.

Fahd said he was hopeful of gaining gold medals by Hussein Tahleh, Mohammad Abul Ruz, Raed Naji, and Shadi Abu Taleb. Zaha Talhoumi and Luma Haddad have tough matches and Ahlam Bino is very close to a medal.

Karate team arrives

The Kingdom's karate team has arrived in Beirut and is hopeful of scoring good results in most categories.

Freestyle wrestling begins Thursday and Ismail Sheikh, who won the gold in the Arab Youth Championship last year, is a top favourite.



Hisham Al Masri of Syria competes in the men's 400m freestyle at the Pan-Arab Games in the Bekaa Valley of Zahle. Al Masri won the gold medal in a time of 4:28.80 seconds (Reuters photo)

Jordan finishes 4th in women's basketball

Men lose to Syria, play for 5th and 6th places

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

JORDAN'S WOMEN'S basketball team Tuesday concluded their inaugural participation in the Pan-Arab Games when they finished fourth after losing to hosts Lebanon 60-51 in an exciting match at Antraj Club stadium.

Jordan thus lost the bronze medal after an impressive performance in three of their matches with the younger lineup proving that they would have made a difference had they been given a chance in earlier matches.

The women's standings are still undecided as Egypt and Tunisia meet tonight in the battle for top two places. Lebanon will most probably take the bronze as they still have a match against Egypt, and Tunisia has a match against Syria.

While they lost their opening match 79-46 to Egypt, Jordan improved from one match to another and scored their only win over Syria 56-53.

They were impressive in their 52-41 (22-22) defeat to Tunisia who had defeated Lebanon 55-52. Lebanon beat Syria 57-44.

The fourth place finish and close results against stronger teams was positive taking into consideration that a big question mark loomed over their participation after they lost three of their friendly matches against Syria last month.

The team was only given the go-ahead to take part in the Games to ensure continuity for the women's game which had been non-existent from 1983-1995 when the team took part in the Asian Championship.

The Lebanese team, known for their fast attacking style and press defence, were led by Gassia Khacharian, Salpi Chokarian and Aline Chahian.

The hosts took a lead at first at 24-15 before five consecutive points by Zina Farah narrowed the gap to 24-20. Lebanon won the first half 28-24 again by another three-point by Farah.

Jordan's star player, Jumana Salti, did not carry the team as expected especially in scoring after she got her third foul early in the second half and a few minutes took her fourth as Lebanon led 32-28.

A three-pointer by Chokarian gave Lebanon the

lead at 42-34 as Salti was ruled out of the game after a slight injury while going for an outboard loose ball.

Another three-pointer by Khacharian further expanded the Lebanese lead followed by scores from Sossi Injokshian as the scoreboard showed a commanding 50-38 score.

Jordan's Sirsa Naghaway, who was given little playing time in earlier matches, scored the first of her three 3-pointers and went on to score another 8 consecutive points to narrow the gap at 55-48.

Hala Khalaf scored for Jordan as Vartoug Markarian added Lebanon's next 5 points to win the match 60-51.

The Jordanian team includes Rana Hussein, Hala Muheisen, Jumana Salti, Zina Farah, Luma Abu Judum, Hind Ghouri, Hala Khalaf, Hala Ghantas, Lubna Masri, Sirsa Naghaway, Tala Mauge and Tetyana Qardan.

Basketball is the only team sport Jordan's women will take part in. Individual sports are athletics, swimming, taekwondo, equestrian and table tennis.

Men's team loses to Syria

Jordan's men's basketball team lost to titleholders Syria 66-62 after a highly competitive match and will now play for 5th and 6th places Wednesday.

Jordan needed to win to join Saudi Arabia from Group 1, and Lebanon and the UAE from Group 2 in the second round.

However, Syria took the qualifying slot and held on to a precious victory in a match that reminded fans of the 1992 final in which biased refereeing led to Syria's win of the gold medal with a 70-66 win over Jordan who finished runner-up.

Jordan had the chance to win the match after Zeid Alkhas tied the score at 62-62 with 1:22 remaining.

Syria's Mohammad Abu Sa'da lost a free throw and scored another to lead 63-62.

Jordan's Husam Lutfi then lost a scoring chance as Syria called time out with 27 seconds remaining.

Syria scored again to lead 64-62 as Lutfi was fouled again with 9 seconds left but failed to convert two free throws one of which was in but was ruled out by the referees.

Syria's Anwar Abdul Hay, who had 22 points in the match added two free throws ending the match 66-62 to move to the second round.

Syria had won the first half 29-28. But as the second half started, Syria's top two Abu Sa'da and Abdul Hay displayed their excellent shooting abilities and had four three-pointers to take the lead 45-37 and 52-42.

Syria continued to lead before Jordan started to narrow the gap taking advantage of turnovers as Naser Alawneh scored. Syria still led 58-53 but with 5 points from Alkhas the score was narrowed down to 4 points as Syria led 62-58 with 3:33 remaining.

Ma'an Odeh scored before Alkhas tied the game after which free throws and match experience made the difference as Syria won the match.

The Jordanian team was hopeful of beating Syria as they had one out of three friendly matches last month while missing Odeh and Alkhas from the lineup.

The team, however, has been dealing with administrative snags surrounding the head coach whose tantrums led federation officials to enlist Rizeq Masri and women's coach Fadi Sabbah as assistants. Playing in Group 1, Jordan had beat Morocco 59-47, and Libya 95-66 but lost 88-59 to Saudi Arabia. Group 2 included Lebanon, Qatar, the UAE and Kuwait.

Jordan's young line-up of Mahmoud Sh'aban, Faissal Nsour and Fadi Saqqa has, however, fared well with big names like Hilal Barakat, Yousef Zaghloul, Naser Bushnaq and Marwan Ma'touq missing from the line-up.

Jordan had won the first gold medal in team sports when the basketball team were crowned champions after defeating Iraq 80-78 in the final in the 1985 Games in Morocco. They finished runner-up behind Syria in the 1992 Games in Syria following a controversial match.

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The International Federation of the Football Association (FIFA) General Secretary Joseph Blatter holds up a slip of paper with the name of Japan on it during the draw for the second round of the Asia zone of the World Cup qualifying competitions in Zurich. Each group will play a league system in which each team plays the others in a home and away format. The matches are to be played between September 12 and November 9 (Reuters photo)

Kuwait and Saudi in Group A of Asian World Cup draw

ZURICH (AFP) — Football's world governing body FIFA made the Asian final round draw for the 1998 World Cup here Tuesday.

Group A: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, China, Iran, Qatar.
Group B: South Korea, Kazakhstan, Japan, Uzbekistan, United Arab Emirates.
Matches will be played between Sept. 12

and Nov. 9.

The two group winners qualify directly for France. Runners-up play off for third place in 1998 finals. The loser of this play-off plays Oceania Zone winners Australia on a home and away basis for a place in France.

The dates for those matches are: Nov. 22 in Asia, Nov. 29 in Australia.

McRae's favourite stage out of New Zealand Rally

WELLINGTON (AFP) — Former world champion Colin McRae said Tuesday he was not concerned that his favourite stage was no longer part of the New Zealand Rally.

The Scot arrived Tuesday aiming for his fourth win in the rally starting on August 2, and said he wasn't bothered that the Motu Forest stage around the Bay of Plenty in eastern New Zealand was no longer part of the race.

The Subaru driver based each of his wins from 1993 to 1995 on the tortuous 45 kilometre (27 miles) twisting track, where he was always at least 30 seconds quicker than his nearest rival.

This year's rally is based more around Auckland.

McRae said his new Impreza was well suited to the new course.

"It's not quite as good as the old car on the tight, twisty roads, but it's better on the faster, sweeping stages, so it doesn't really matter we haven't got the Motu any more," he said.

The Subaru team has arrived early to test on a back country road, so it can copy conditions McRae and teammate Kenneth Eriksson will encounter.

McRae has been seeded second for the rally and admits it is crucial in his bid to regain the world championship title he won in 1995.

He starts 10 points behind last year's winner Tommi Makinen and just four points ahead of former winner Carlos Sainz.

"If Tommi wins and we have a bad result it will make it very difficult for the rest of the series. Maybe we've got a slight psychological advantage because Tommi's crashed here the last two years."

McRae said tactics would be less prevalent in this year's course as the roads were smooth: "It'll be flat out all the way."

"I really like the stages. It reminds me a lot of Scotland. Hopefully we can repeat the win."

Cape Town hopes to win 2004 bid

PRETORIA (AFP) — South Africa's crime problem should not pose a threat to Cape Town's bid for the 2004 Olympic Games, members of a visiting International Olympic Committee (IOC) fact-finding team said Tuesday.

"All major cities in world have a crime problem," Prince Albert of Monaco told reporters here after he and other members of the IOC team held talks early Tuesday with President Nelson Mandela.

Libyan IOC member Bashir Attaraboulsi said that Atlanta, which staged the games a year ago, also had a high rate of crime.

"The important thing is security," Attaraboulsi said, adding that Cape Town's crime problem could be settled "in three, four or five years."

"One of the important elements is that Africa has not had the Olympic games," he added. "It is a very strong competition and Cape Town has a very good chance."

Mandela said he had urged the fact-finders to award the 2004 Games to Cape Town because the Olympics had never been staged in Africa.

"We sincerely hope that the fact that the Olympic Games have never come to Africa ... that they will be coming to South Africa," Mandela said.

Cape Town is one of five cities on the

shortlist to stage the 2004 Olympics alongside Rome, Athens, Stockholm and Buenos Aires.

The winning bid is due to be announced in Lausanne, Switzerland on September 5.

Asked whether the team had given any indication if they supported Cape Town's bid, Mandela replied that he had not been given any clue as to the committee's thinking.

He added, however, that IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch, "is a friend of all countries who are struggling for democracy; we are one of those countries."

Prince Albert said the team had already visited Cape Town and were due to return to the city later Tuesday.

"It was a very short visit but nonetheless it gave us good idea," he said. "We received a lot of information. It is very useful material."

He added that all five candidates have "very, very strong bids."

It will be a very tight competition.

Prince Albert said the team had also visited Robben Island, the former political prison off Cape Town where Mandela spent the bulk of his 27 years in apartheid jails.

"I was very moved," he said.

Rafter win in Infiniti Open

LOS ANGELES (R) — Fifth seed Patrick Rafter of Australia outlasted Frenchman Lionel Roux 7-6 (7-3) 6-7 (3-7) 6-3 in the first-round at the \$303,000 Infiniti Open on Monday.

In the night match, second-seeded Thomas Enqvist of Sweden rolled past American Steve Bryan, 6-3 6-2 in 73 minutes.

In other first-round matches, American Vincent Spadea used six service breaks to beat Frenchman Stephane Simian, 6-4 6-2 for the second time in as many weeks. Guillaume Raoux, Simian's compatriot, swept past Argentine Gaston Etlis, 6-3 6-4.

Sandon Stolle nearly blew a 6-0 third set tiebreaker lead before outlasting fellow Australian Michael Tebbutt, 2-6 6-3 7-6 (7-5) in their first matchup. Kenneth Carlsen of Denmark capitalised on seven faults to oust Canadian Sebastian Lareau, 7-6 (7-4) 6-1.

Rafter is enjoying his best season since turning pro in 1991, reaching the finals of three ATP Tour events while advancing to the semifinals of the French Open and round of 16 at Wimbledon last month.

"I hope it is my best season. If it is I'll be winning a few tournaments," smiled the world's number, who has risen to number 19 ranked in the current ATP tour rankings.

"This year has been fantastic for me. I really don't have a helluva lot to defend for the rest of the year. This is chance to make my big jump into the top 10. Let's just hope

mentally and physically I can hold up."

Despite his success, Rafter decided on a two-week break at his adopted home in Bermuda to get ready for the gruelling hardcourt season in the United States.

"I was hanging out there on the beach doing nothing," he said. "It was fantastic."

"It's a really tough grind. It's really hot. If I do well, I'll take a week off before the U.S. Open, try not to miss Davis Cup, the Grand Slam Cup and then I've got five tournaments in Europe. That's non-stop till the end of the year. If I'm gonna have my break, I might as well have it now."

Though Rafter displayed an aggressive serve-and-volley style to win the opening set tiebreaker, he allowed Roux to level the match after blowing a pair of match points at 5-3 in the second set.

"I thought 'be careful here because he can get back into the match,'" Rafter said of the world's 80th ranked player. "That's exactly what happened. I got a little tired on my service game, he came up with some great shots and the next thing you know we were back on even terms again."

However, the Australian took command with pivotal break in the sixth game and served out the two-hour 28-minute contest to improve to 36-16 on the year.

"All in all when the pressure got on again in the third, I kept my composure, and I volleyed extremely well."

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Johnson sues for right to work

BRAMPTON, Canada (AFP) — Disgraced sprinter Ben Johnson has started legal action to force the International Amateur Athletic Federation to lift its life ban for two drugs offences. His lawyers told a court the ban constituted a restraint of trade. The 36-year-old was first banned after winning the Seoul Olympic 100m in a world record 9.79sec when he failed an anabolic steroid test and again in 1993, a year after returning to competition, when he failed a testosterone test. The court adjourned its ruling to Friday.

China's hopes dim without Wang

BEIJING (AFP) — China has unveiled its team for next month's Athletics World Championships in Athens, with medal hopes looking extremely slim in the absence of long-distance track queen Wang Junxia. Wang, the 5,000m Olympic champion and 10,000m world record holder, confirmed recently that she would not take part in the competition, even if offered a wild card by the International Amateur Athletics Federation. Wang's withdrawal leaves medal hopes resting on Huang Zhihong, who took silver in the women's shot putt at the Olympics in Atlanta last year. Other possible contenders include Gao Hongmiao who won last year's World cup 10-kilometres walk, and Ren Xiujian who is currently ranked among the world's top 10 women triple jumpers.

Houston Sacramento vie for trials

INDIANAPOLIS (R) — Houston, New Orleans and Sacramento, California, are vying for the opportunity to host the U.S. Olympic track and field trials ahead of the 2000 Sydney Games. USA track and field announced on Monday, USATF said it received inquiries from 67 different organisations representing 46 cities in 23 states who expressed interest in hosting the trials. The decision will be made at USATF's next annual meeting, in Dallas on December 2-6, the governing body for track and field said. An estimated 1,200 athletes will compete in 37 events at the trials with the top three finishers in each event qualifying for the trip to Sydney, provided they attain the Olympic qualifying standards.



Colorado Rockies' shortstop Walt Weiss takes the throw from catcher Jeff Reed to catch Montreal Expos' Mike Lansing stealing second during first inning NL action in Montreal. Montreal beat Colorado 8-4 (Reuters photo)

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SOON IN JORDAN

Turkish government partners agree to ban Islamic schools

ANKARA (AFP) — Coalition partners in Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's secular government Tuesday agreed on a controversial bill under which hundreds of state-run secondary schools with Islamic education would be closed down.

"There is full agreement on the education bill," Deputy Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit told reporters here after an eight-hour cabinet meeting which started Monday night.

"Our government will begin implementing the new education regime this year," Education Minister Hikmet Uluoglu told reporters.

The education bill must be approved by parliament before taking effect. The national assembly is expected to vote in early

August. Turkey's pro-Islamist opposition denounced the government move, with Islamist former Premier Necmettin Erbakan calling the bill "an example of pro-secular fascism."

Addressing deputies from his Welfare Party, Mr. Erbakan called on Mr. Yilmaz's government to hold a referendum on the bill, saying: "Let the people decide on whether they want to learn their religion in schools or not."

The closure of secondary schools with religious education had been a major source of dispute between Turkey's powerful pro-secular generals and the Islamist-led government of Mr. Erbakan, who resigned last month under strong pressure by the army.

Mr. Erbakan and the generals had been at odds

over creeping Islamisation during his 12-month term as prime minister.

Mr. Erbakan's move to reject an army-backed plan to crack down on religious extremism had escalated tensions and raised public fears of a military coup.

Mr. Yilmaz's three-party coalition government replaced Mr. Erbakan's cabinet late last month and won a parliamentary confidence vote on July 12.

Conservative Mr. Yilmaz has said his government will take necessary measures to protect Turkey's secular regime from Islamist fundamentalist threats.

Mr. Erbakan's pro-Islamist Welfare Party has said it will make all efforts to prevent the bill from receiving parliamentary approval.

Algerian forces kill 140 Islamist rebels — press

PARIS (R) — Algerian troops have killed about 140 of some 180 guerrillas they had encircled, and bulldozers clearing a path for the advance have unearthed dozens of corpses of unidentified people, an Algerian newspaper said Tuesday.

"In their advance, the bulldozers unearthed by accident dozens of corpses. The authorities are still unable to identify whether they are civilians kidnapped by armed gangs, or terrorists," Al Watan newspaper said.

The offensive began 10 days ago when a kidnapped woman escaped her rebel abductors and tipped off government forces on the gunmen's whereabouts, the newspaper said.

About 20 rebels had attacked a hamlet near an underground guerrilla base in Attatba area of Blida province, about 50 kilometres south of Algiers, the newspaper said.

They cut the throats of three women in the attack and abducted the woman, who was handed over to the assailants' leader for sexual abuse, Al Watan said.

"At the end of the attack, a gang chief leading the assailants ordered a gunman to cut open a slain woman's thorax and eat her heart. Indeed, he ate the woman's heart before the eyes of horrified women and children," it

Residents deny reports that army killed 100 Islamists

TIPAZA (AP) — Residents of this coastal town Monday denied reports that government troops killed about 100 Islamists during a raid on a clandestine meeting.

The raid was also reported in Monday's edition of Algiers' French language L'Authentique, a newspaper considered to have sources close to the government.

The newspaper said the militants targeted had been responsible for the recent massacre of 14 people in the nearby town of Abu Ismail.

"We don't know anything about this raid," one resident of Tipaza told the Associated Press. All others questioned also denied any knowledge of an operation in the area. All refused to be named for fear of reprisals.

The security forces have so far killed about 140 rebels in their slow offensive hampered by the rugged area, Al Watan said.

The guerrillas were members of gangs operating in the Algiers Islamist stronghold of Bab Al Oud, Sidi Musa area in Blida region and Kolea in the coastal province of Tipaza, some 60 kilometres southwest of Algiers, it said.

They had gone to the area to attend a congress to plan strategy.

Al Watan did not say to which rebel organisations the guerrillas belonged.

L'Authentique newspaper, giving a slightly different version of the huge operation, said Monday they were members of the Armed Islamist Group (GIA).

L'Authentique said GIA chief Antar Zouabri might be among the trapped

rebels. The authorities blame the GIA for the massacres of hundreds of villagers in remote hamlets, for bombings mainly in Algiers and the murders of leading intellectuals and journalists.

"Only about 40 terrorists are still alive [from the 180 besieged ones]," Al Watan said.

In a separate operation, security forces killed five rebels in Ouled Ali hamlet near Khemis Al Khechna, about 40 kilometres east of Algiers, Monday, L'Authentique reported Tuesday.

The newspaper said the five were "dangerous terrorists" who took part in villagers' massacres and train attacks in the area.

About 60,000 people have been killed in Algeria since January 1992 when the authorities cancelled a general election in which Islamists had taken a huge lead.

Marijuana plants springing up on Egyptian balconies

CAIRO (AFP) — Marijuana has been sprouting on Egyptian balconies since residents discovered that the nation's most widely consumed drug grows as well at home as it does in the Sinai desert where the bedouin cultivate it.

According to the head of the interior ministry's anti-narcotics authority, General Mohammad Shaarawi, security services recently discovered cases of marijuana, or "bungo," cultivation on balconies and even rooftops.

A police officer who asked not to be identified said, "They plant marijuana seeds in pots ... and to fool their neighbours' noses, at the same time they grow basil, which has a strong smell."

The Egyptian press began regularly publishing several months ago the arrests of amateur bungo growers in poor Cairo neighbourhoods and the provinces.

"It's not worth it," said Gen. Shaarawi. "To risk life imprisonment with hard labour for

growing an Indian hemp plant for six months which yields a drug of mediocre quality is in my eyes pure folly," he said.

That was not the opinion of an amateur grower, who spoke under cover of anonymity.

"It's more reliable than buying from a dealer who may be followed by police or can't be found when you need some. I cut and dry the bungo leaves on my terrace, in front of my neighbours who think it's molokhia, or mallow, a favourite Egyptian dish."

"What's more, it doesn't cost anything because a few seeds will suffice, and it's easy to grow because it doesn't need to be watered every day," he said.

"All that adds to the satisfaction of consuming the product of my own labour. My only regret is that I don't have enough space to increase my harvest," another grower said.

For the last five years, bungo has been at the top of the drug consumption hit parade, police say, because it is less expensive than narcotics. A 50-gramme package of bungo

sells for six dollars.

Bungo is sold, sometimes publicly, in some Cairo cafes and alleys.

"From each package, it is possible to roll four long cigarettes, called a 'sarukh' or missiles, said one consumer, who asked not to be identified.

But the Sinai is still the bungo-growing capital, Gen. Shaarawi said. With "the increase in our helicopter operations in 1996, the bedouin have been forced to grow in the steepest areas of the desert," he said.

"In 1996, we destroyed 332 acres of Indian hemp and seized 7.5 tonnes of bungo from dealers. This year is the beginning of the end for the bungo phenomenon," the general said.

He said the general anti-narcotics authority, founded in 1929, wiped out cocaine cultivation in Egypt in the first half of the century and has considerably reduced hashish and heroin production, which was widespread in the 1980s.



FAULT OF MOTHER EARTH NOT PATHFINDER: This picture cropped from the panoramic picture released by NASA Monday and made by the Mars Pathfinder shows the Sojourner making an observation of the rock named Yogi. Communications with the Pathfinder were reestablished Monday after two days of errors that project managers said were made on the ground and not the fault of the space craft (AFP photo)

Pathfinder roaming Mars finally calls mother Earth

PASADENA (R) — Relieved scientists re-established communications with the Mars Pathfinder spacecraft Monday after a weekend during which the landing craft and its little rover refused to phone home.

What a difference a day makes, said a smiling Brian Muirhead, the Pathfinder project manager. The team is extremely pleased with our current status.

Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) spokesman Alan Wood said scientists re-established contact with the landing craft at 2:45 a.m. PDT (0945 GMT) Monday after losing the signal Saturday night. All communications between the earth and the rover, Sojourner, must go through the lander.

The spacecraft, on command from earth, started sending a stream of engineering data telling scientists the lander and rover were in fine shape. Mr. Wood said.

The communications session, using both the lander's antennas, lasted about 6 1/2 hours, Mr. Wood said.

Mr. Muirhead said the weekend's communications blackout was associated mostly with ground operations and not with the computers on board the rover and the lander, as had been the case the previous weekend, when the spacecraft failed to hook up with earth.

"We'll be working to eliminate the cause of these (ground) problems in the coming days as we return to a more normal mode of operations," Mr. Muirhead said.

Computer scientist Glen Reeves explained that last weekend's blackout had been caused by the computer on board the Pathfinder landing craft resetting itself when it sensed an overload.

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Miss America contestants can choose 2-piece suits

ATLANTIC CITY (R) — A skimpier — but not too much — swimsuit is coming to the Miss America pageant.

Contestants in the biggest beauty contest in the United States this September will have the option of trading in their traditional one-piece bathing suits for two-piece suits, as long as certain standards of modesty are maintained, pageant officials said Monday.

Leonard Horn, president of the Miss America Organisation, said in a news release. It will be the first time in the 77-year history of the pageant that contestants will be allowed to choose their own one- or two-piece swimsuits.

Instead of wearing the one-piece model selected by organisers, "There will be certain parameters," Horn told a news conference in Pasadena. "No thongs or bikinis. It's not supposed to be sexual or sexy and it won't be."

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